

# LENIN

IN

# LONDON





# ВИДЕНИИ В ЛОНДОНЕ

Пособие для студентов педагогических институтов  
(на английском языке)



Составила и обработала Н. Б. КАРАЧАН

ИЗДАТЕЛЬСТВО „ПРОСВЕЩЕНИЕ“  
ЛЕНИНГРАДСКОЕ ОТДЕЛЕНИЕ  
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## ПРЕДИСЛОВИЕ

**К**НИГА «Ленин в Лондоне» является пособием для студентов I--II курсов факультетов английского языка педагогических институтов и университетов. Она может быть использована и как книга для чтения, и как источник дополнительного материала при работе над темой «В. И. Ленин — вождь мирового пролетариата».

Книга делится на две части. В первой части, написанной составителем настоящего пособия на основе литературных источников (см. ссылки к тексту), писем и личных бесед с Э. Ротштейном (председателем правления Библиотеки Маркса в Лондоне) Ф. Джексоном (заведующим библиотекой ЦК Коммунистической партии Великобритании), подробно освещено пребывание В. И. Ленина в Лондоне в период с 1902 по 1908 год: 1) Первый приезд в Лондон, организация выпуска газеты «Искра»; 2) II, III и V съезды РСДРП в Лондоне; 3) Работа в Британском музее.

Вторая часть книги не имеет непосредственного отношения к пребыванию В. И. Ленина в Лондоне, но включение ее в пособие представляется вполне закономерным.

Будучи в Лондоне, Владимир Ильич часто посещал рабочие собрания и митинги; уже тогда он установил контакт с деятелями английского рабочего движения. Идеи В. И. Ленина оказали огромное влияние на развитие революционной мысли в Англии, на создание в 1920 году Коммунистической партии Великобритании.

Поэтому составитель пособия счел возможным включить во вторую часть книги воспоминания о В. И. Ленине видных деятелей рабочего и коммунистического движения в Англии, писателей и журналистов, а также статьи современных деятелей Коммунистической партии Великобритании, посвященные некоторым работам Владимира Ильича.

Тексты воспоминаний расположены в хронологическом порядке встреч авторов с В. И. Лениным. Исключение составляет лишь отрывок из автобиографической книги английского писателя Г. Уэллса, написанной в 1934 году. Он помещен сразу же после

части главы из книги этого же автора «Россия во мгле», которая была опубликована в 1920 году. Противоположность суждений автора этих двух отрывков особенно наглядно видна при их сопоставлении.

В 1920 году писатель-фантаст, сумевший описать межпланетные полеты, увидел в ленинском плане электрификации только утопию и назвал Владимира Ильича «кремлевским мечтателем». В 1934 году, когда Уэллс снова посетил Советский Союз, его спор с Лениным был уже решен историей, и писатель, в общем-то далекий от марксизма, вынужден был признать несомненные успехи социалистического строительства.

В конце каждой статьи помещен предельно краткий комментарий, а в конце книги — небольшие биографические справки о лицах, написавших воспоминания или упоминаемых в статьях.

Составитель пособия надеется, что каждый документ или статья, включенные в книгу, помогут с еще большей ясностью представить себе образ величайшего человека нашей эпохи, который в тяжелых условиях эмиграции выковывал теоретические и организационные основы нашей партии, образ Владимира Ильича Ленина.



Составитель книги приносит глубокую благодарность Э. Ротштейну и Ф. Джексону за советы и замечания, высказанные в личных беседах; сотрудникам Института марксизма-ленинизма при ЦК КПСС и сотрудникам Ленинградского филиала Центрального музея В. И. Ленина — за консультацию и помощь в подборе иллюстраций.

*Н. Карачан*



# Lenin in London



"Leader and teacher of the working people of the whole world, organiser of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the genius of the socialist revolution, founder of the Soviet State, the greatest of scientists and at the same time the most warmhearted and unassuming of men — such is Lenin as humanity knows him."

*V. I. Lenin. A Short Biography,*  
M., 1963





# London and Its Historic Associations

LONDON, as the capital city for a thousand years, has a deep and intimate connection with all the struggles of the working people of England from the earliest times.

London in 1381 saw the triumph and the tragedy of the great Peasant Rising led by John Ball and Wat Tyler,<sup>1</sup> which the London poor joined when the peasants reached the capital and threw open its gates to them. Smithfield, now the Central Meat Market, was the scene of the treacherous murder of Wat Tyler by the Court nobles and the Lord Mayor. Here took place many struggles of the London porters and other guilds of the London working class in the days of manufacture. Here, in the days of the English Revolution, King Charles<sup>2</sup> lost his head on the scaffold in Whitehall; here the London workers supported, in the eighteenth century, the Wilkes and Liberty movement<sup>3</sup> and early radical reform struggles against the iniquitous Newspaper Tax; here were some of the great days of the Charter movement in the 1830's and 1840's;<sup>4</sup> here mass struggles in the 1860's helped to secure the vote for the first time for a section of the working class in the Reform Act of 1867;<sup>5</sup> here, later in the nineteenth century, the first Socialist party in this country — the Social Democratic Federation — was formed in 1884; the great unemployed struggles took place at the end of the 80's, and the "new unionism" — the trade unions of the dockers, gas workers and other mass occupations — came into existence.

Marx, Engels and Lenin moved and worked in London, and saw some of the later developments. [...] Marx and Engels drew on much of the experience of the London workers, as well as on the experience of British capitalism as a whole, which Marx studied in the British Museum, to build the theory and practice of scientific socialism and communism.

Lenin, developing their theory and practice, had his personal experience of life among the London workers as well as the riches of the British Museum; and when the Bolshevik Party, with Lenin at its head, led the Russian workers for the first time in history, to the overthrow of capitalism and the laying of foundations for socialist society, no socialist movement in the world declared its support for the October Revolution earlier than the British Socialist Party, successor of the SDF<sup>6</sup> centred in London.

*From London Landmarks. A guide with maps to places where Marx, Engels and Lenin lived and worked, 3 ed., published by the Communist Party, London, pp. 1—2.*

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Имеется в виду крестьянское антифеодалное восстание 1381 года, возглавленное Уотом Тайлером и Джоном Боллом. Восставшие требовали отмены крепостного права, а наиболее радикальная часть — наделения крестьян землей и уничтожения всех сословных различий.

<sup>2</sup> Карл I (1600—1649) — английский король (1625—1649) из династии Стюартов, низложен во время английской буржуазной революции XVII века и казнен.

<sup>3</sup> Народное движение за расширение гражданских прав. Джон Вилкес (1727—1797) — видный политический деятель. Сын виноградаря, он сумел добиться избрания в парламент, но за свои политические убеждения вскоре был заточен в Тауэр. Затем он эмигрировал во Францию, но спустя некоторое время вернулся в Англию, где вновь был арестован. Под влиянием народных волнений Вилкеса освободили и он был избран мэром Лондона, а затем членом парламента. Одним из лозунгов народного движения второй половины XVIII века был Wilkes and Liberty.

<sup>4</sup> Чартизм — первое широкое, действительно массовое, политически оформленное, пролетарское движение. Возник в Англии в 30-х годах XIX в. Требования чартистов (равное представительство, всеобщее избирательное право, годовой срок полномочий парламента, отмена имущественного ценза, тайна подачи голосов,



вознаграждение депутатов) были изложены в виде петиции парламенту, а затем в виде законопроекта (1838), получившего название «Народная хартия». Чартизм заставил английские господствующие классы пойти на ряд уступок.

<sup>5</sup> Билль о предоставлении права голоса квартиросъемщикам.

<sup>6</sup> The Social Democratic Federation — Социал-демократическая федерация в Англии была основана в 1884 году. Наряду с реформистами и анархистами в нее входила группа революционных социал-демократов, сторонников марксизма (Г. Квелч, Т. Мани, Э. Эвелинг, Элеонора Маркс и др.), составлявших левое крыло социалистического движения в Англии. Ф. Энгельс резко критиковал федерацию за догматизм и сектантство. В 1907 году федерация была названа Социал-демократической партией, которая в 1911 году совместно с левыми элементами Независимой рабочей партии образовала Британскую социалистическую партию; в 1920 году большинство членов этой партии приняло участие в основании Коммунистической партии Великобритании.

# Lenin in London

Spirit of Lenin,  
light on thie city now!  
Light up this city now!

*Mac Diarmid\**

THE NAME of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin has always been the symbol of a happy future for all those who want a lasting peace, freedom, equality and fraternity.

But the tsarist government and all the enemies of the working people saw in V. I. Lenin a powerful and dangerous enemy whom they hated and were terribly afraid of.

The gendarme Zubatov, notorious for his black deeds, reported to his chief as early as 1900 that "there is nobody bigger than Ulyanov in the revolution today", and recommended that Lenin should be assassinated.

From the very beginning of his revolutionary activity Vladimir Ilyich was constantly persecuted by the police. Several times he was deported to the remotest parts of Russia, but the revolutionary force of Lenin's ideas frightened his persecutors even from there.

Soon after Lenin's return from exile to Shushenskoye in January, 1900, it was clear that his further stay in Russia was becoming increasingly dangerous.

On the 16th of July, 1900, Vladimir Ilyich left Russia for Germany. That was the beginning of his first period of emigration. V. I. Lenin was obliged to spend many years in exile abroad. Germany, France, Poland, Switzerland, Belgium, England, Sweden and Finland — in all these countries

\* MacDiarmid. *Three Hymns to Lenin*, Edinburgh, 1957, p. 30.





V. I. Lenin in 1897

there are towns or villages where the greatest leader of the working class lived at various times.

In the city of London, Vladimir Ilyich lived and worked in the early part of the 20th century. In all V. I. Lenin made five visits to the capital of England between 1902 and 1908.

The first time he arrived there was in April, 1902, to continue the illegal publication of *Iskra*, and he remained in London till May, 1903.

Then Vladimir Ilyich went to London to attend the Second Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (1903), the Third Congress (1905), and its Fifth Congress (1907).

His last visit was in May, 1908, to do some special research work in the Reading Room of the British Museum.

The British working people revere Lenin's memory and do everything they can to commemorate and to preserve intact all the places in London connected with the name of the great Lenin.

### **The House where Lenin Lived in 1902—1903**

It was in the spring of 1902, that Vladimir Ilyich Lenin and his wife, Nadezhda Konstantinovna Krupskaya, first came to the capital of Great Britain.

"We arrived in London in April 1902," wrote Nadezhda Konstantinovna. "The immensity of London staggered us. Although the weather was filthy the day we arrived, Vladimir Ilyich brightened up and at once began to look round this citadel of capitalism with curiosity, Plekhanov and the editorial conflicts for the moment forgotten." \*

At Charing Cross<sup>1</sup> they were met by Nikolai Alexeyev, a political emigrant living in London. For a short while N. Alexeyev acted as their guide.

At first Lenin and Krupskaya rented two rooms in a house near Regent's Square (the actual address is not definitely known). But as the rent was rather high, Vladimir

\* N. K. Krupskaya. *Reminiscences of Lenin*, M., F. L. P. H., 1959, p. 69.





No. 30, Holford Square, Finsbury

Ilyich and Nadezhda Konstantinovna moved into two cheaper unfurnished rooms at 30 Holford Square, Finsbury, where they stayed till May, 1903. Like all the exiles from tsarist Russia, Lenin and Krupskaya were very short of money and furnished their rooms in a very modest way. Nadezhda Konstantinovna did her own house-keeping and shopping, and prepared meals on a small paraffin stove. She was helped to some degree by her mother, who eventually came to London.

However, Krupskaya devoted most of her time to helping Lenin. It was the permanent task of Nadezhda Konstantinovna to code letters to Russia and decode the correspondence from there. These letters were usually written in invisible ink between the lines of letters copied from an old German letter-writing manual.

Their landlady, Mrs. Yeo, was a typical middle-class Englishwoman who couldn't understand the life of her tenants and who was in doubt about many things concerning

them. Ralph Fox vividly describes her feelings and attitude towards Lenin and Krupskaya: \*

"The landlady regarded them with the deep suspicion due from a respectable Englishwoman to foreigners in the year 1902. The suspicion was rightly deepened when she saw that the two strangers did not make any effort to make their room like 'home', but just bought the minimum of beds, tables, chairs, and bookshelves. They didn't even hang up curtains, the beautiful, dusty, essential lace curtains that hung at every window in the square. It was hardly respectable, and she told them so. Then there was the matter of Krupskaya, who was going about with immodestly undecorated fingers, which seemed to indicate that she was no better than she should be. The good Mrs. Yeo (such was her truly English name) could hardly forbear to point out the consequences which the absence on a female finger of a gold hoop would imply, when that female was living with a man. Mrs. Yeo had to be told very firmly by Dr. Alexeyev that her lodgers had been lawfully wedded for many years, and that any hints to the contrary would lead straight to a libel action. The very mention of the awful word *law* had a majestic effect. Mrs. Yeo withdrew vanquished. [...] ...but she could hardly have been expected to understand... that the suspiciously negligent Krupskaya was actually a gaolbird.

This latter fact, indeed, sent thrills of horror ever down the spines of good English gentlemen Socialists. 'Can it be possible that you have really been in prison?' one of them asked her. 'If my wife imprisoned, I can't think what I should do!'"

But pretty soon the first troubles over wedding-ring, curtains, etc. were overcome and Lenin and his wife lived on untroubled. They were just Mr. and Mrs. Richter,<sup>2</sup> a German lady and gentleman of studious habits, to their landlady and neighbours. Mrs. Yeo never suspected that the polite Mr. Richter was editing the most revolutionary newspaper *Iskra*, and the quiet Mrs. Richter who spent so much time at home, was busy ciphering and deciphering a revolutionary party's correspondence with Russia.

Many other Russian Social-Democratic exiles lived not very far from Lenin's flat in Holford Square. In spring, 1902,

\* R. Fox. *Lenin. A Biography*, New York, 1934, p. 92.





The entrance, the two windows and the balcony of the rooms rented by V. I. Lenin and N. K. Krupskaya in 1902—1903

when the decision to move the printing of *Iskra* to Great Britain had been taken, they one by one made their way to London. L. Martov and Vera Zasulich arrived shortly after Lenin. They set up a communal household with N. Alexeyev in five small rooms in Sidmouth Street, about ten minutes' walk from Holford Square. That was a commune of Russian intellectuals with their usual habits of Bohemian life.

When the Petersburg worker, I. Babushkin, came to London for a short time, he was put up in the commune too. In a few days Babushkin effected a complete transformation: the rooms were cleaned, the tables covered with paper, the floor ceased to be strewn with communal property.

Vladimir Ilyich had to visit the commune almost every day on editorial questions, but he never stayed there for a minute after business was finished. If Mrs. Yeo very soon got used to the Lenin family, who were always quiet, nice and tactful to her, the landlord in Sidmouth Street couldn't bear his noisy lodgers and the constant stream of visitors to them. Half way through the second quarter he gave the Russian lodgers notice and the commune collapsed.

The actual centre around which all the political activity of the Russians was concentrated in London in those days of 1902—1903 was Lenin's flat.

Nowadays it is impossible to pay a visit to this flat on the first floor of No. 30 Holford Square, as the building exists no longer. During World War II it was wrecked by a Nazi bomb.

To express its profound respect for the USSR and for the greatest of revolutionary leaders V. I. Lenin, the London County Council put up a memorial plaque on the one remaining wall on the 15th of March, 1942.

The plaque bears a simple inscription:

London County Council  
Here in 1902—1903 lived  
the founder of the USSR  
VLADIMIR ILYICH ULYANOV-LENIN  
(1870—1924)



Memorial to V. I. Lenin erected by the Finsbury Borough Council in Holford Square

On this March day a long procession of Londoners, with a military band at the head, was moving towards Holford Square. At a big rally gathered before the ruined house the representative of the London County Council made a speech.

Five weeks later, on the 22d of April, 1942, the inhabitants of the houses in Holford Square witnessed one more important ceremony.

The Finsbury Borough Council and the working people of the borough decided to commemorate Lenin's stay in Holford Square by erecting a memorial to the great leader of the proletariat. This memorial, which consisted of a white bust of V. I. Lenin and a black marble slab, was put up in the garden where Vladimir Ilyich had often walked, just opposite No. 30.

When unveiling the monument, the then Soviet Ambassador I. Maiskiy said that these two events: putting up the plaque of commemoration on the house and erecting the monument in Holford Square were tokens of friendship and of ever-increasing mutual understanding between the two great nations.

The then General Secretary of the British Communist Party, Harry Pollitt, expressed the feelings and thoughts of the British people in his speech; he said that the name of V. I. Lenin would endure through the ages, and that the best monument to the leader and great genius of the world was the Soviet Union.

In 1957, the local authorities began building new blocks of flats that completely changed the appearance of Holford Square. The Lenin monument and the plaque were removed and placed in Finsbury Town Hall where they may be seen today.

## **The Publication of "Iskra"**

Lenin's main task during his stay in London in 1902—1903 was the publication of *Iskra*.

*Iskra* was the name decided upon for an all Russian revolutionary newspaper. It was impossible to organize its publication in Russia, and in the summer of 1900 Vladimir Ilyich arrived in Munich where the newspaper was to be



printed. He devoted all his attention to organizing its publication, and in December, 1900, the first issue of *Iskra* appeared. It carried the motto "The Spark Will Kindle a Flame!" Lenin was the soul of the newspaper. It was a rare issue that appeared without even one article written by him.

In 1902 there were signs that the tsarist police, in alliance with the Kaiser's detectives, were anxiously searching for the printing house of *Iskra*. During the winter they got on to the trail of the newspaper and it became necessary to move it out of Germany. None of the editorial board was living legally in Munich, most of them having Bulgarian pass-ports. They thought it safer to shift the place of publication to Great Britain. This time London was the choice.

A number of problems arose in connection with this decision. Premises had to be found and Russian type procured. Correspondence concerning the transfer of *Iskra* to London began in February — March, 1902.

N. A. Alexeyev recounts that he received a letter from Martov asking him to examine the possibility of printing the paper in London at the press centre of the Social Democratic Federation (SDF). N. A. Alexeyev contacted Harry Quelch, the Editor of *Justice*,<sup>3</sup> who eagerly agreed to give all the help he could, despite the extreme limitations of space at the SDF press. The only condition made was that Russian compositors should be found to help set the type. The result of the negotiations being successful, V. I. Lenin and the majority of the Board members came to London. In those



The first issue of *Iskra* (December, 1900)





Marx House in Clerkenwell Green.  
Here in 1902 V. I. Lenin edited *Iskra*

years the Twentieth Century Press (publishers of *Justice*. The Social Democrat and other Socialist literature in 1893—1922) was situated in a small building at 37a Clerkenwell Green. In a tiny room, on the first floor of the house, Lenin did his editorial work. After Vladimir Ilyich had edited and prepared the issue, it was sent down to the East End<sup>4</sup> of London to be set in Russian type. Then the frames were sent back, corrected, and were ready to be printed. The British Socialists did their best to help their Russian comrades.

V. I. Lenin appreciated this help given by the SDF. In an obituary on Harry Quelch published in the first issue of *Pravda Truda*, September 11th, 1913, he wrote: \*

"The British Social Democrats — headed by Quelch, readily made their printing plant available. As a consequence Quelch himself had to 'squeeze up': a corner had been boarded off at the print shop by a thin partition to serve him as an editorial room. This corner contained a quite small writing

\* *Marxism Today*, May 1960, London, p. 150.

table, a bookshelf above it, and a chair. When the present writer visited Quelch in this 'editorial office' there was no room for another chair..."

*Iskra* of that period played a very important part in the revolutionary movement of Russia. The newspaper published articles on the questions of organizing and building up a party, on drawing the masses into the revolutionary struggle. It printed reports on the revolutionary activity in various towns of Russia.

On Lenin's initiative and under his guidance, groups of collaborators of *Iskra* and a network of its agents were set up in Russia. They organized the circulation of *Iskra*, sent in letters, articles and other contributions and saw to the collection of funds in support of the paper. Lenin attached great importance to the work of *Iskra* agents.

Among the most active collaborators were I. V. Babushkin, N. E. Bauman, S. I. Gusev, R. S. Zemlyachka, M. I. Kalinin, M. M. Litvinov, E. D. Stasova and many others. Some of them, Babushkin, Bauman, Litvinov, Stasova and others came to London and lived there at different periods in 1902—1903.

I. V. Babushkin, who had escaped from prison in Ekaterinoslav,<sup>5</sup> arrived in London at the beginning of September, 1902. N. K. Krupskaya characterised him as a comrade who had developed politically beyond recognition.

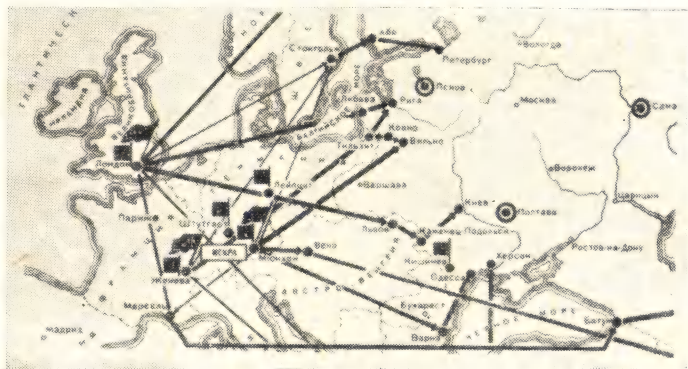


Diagram of the circulation of *Iskra*





*I. V. Babushkin Visiting V. I. Lenin in London*  
(Painting by S. M. Mikhailov)

She wrote: \*

"At that time Plekhanov arrived in London. A meeting was arranged with Babushkin. Russian affairs were discussed. Babushkin had opinions of his own and stood up for them very firmly, so much so that Plekhanov was impressed and began to study him very closely. About his future work in Russia, though, he [Babushkin — *Ed.*] spoke to no one but Vladimir Ilyich, with whom he was particularly intimate."

*Iskra* was edited and published in London for about a year, and in the spring of 1903 it was transferred to Geneva. All the members of the Board, including Lenin, left London.

In the building at 37a Clerkenwell Green, British workers set up the Marx House (the Marx Memorial Library). It was opened in 1933 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the death of K. Marx and as a protest against the Nazi's

\* N. K. Krupskaya. *Reminiscences of Lenin*, M., F. L. P. H., 1959, p. 81.



"Burning of the Books," organized in that year. The Marx Memorial Library contains all the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin in English and many in German and in Russian.

Together with the works of other Marxist writers, there is a total of 12,000 volumes on its shelves.

The President of the Marx Memorial Library is Prof. J. D. Bernal, the Chairman is Dr. Andrew Rothstein.

But it is not only the Library that the British workers cherish at 37a Clerkenwell Green. The actual room where V. I. Lenin edited *Iskra* is kept intact and is shown to visitors. Here, in addition to the final issue of Karl Marx's *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* (printed in red), one can see a copy of *Justice* announcing that N. Lenin<sup>6</sup> (Russian) would speak at the May Day meeting, a facsimile of the first issue of *Iskra* and memorial plaque with the following words:

#### LE N I N

Founder of the USSR  
the first Socialist State  
edited *Iskra* in this room 1902-3.

## Mastering English

Lenin and Krupskaya got down to improving their English as soon as they arrived in London. What they wanted especially was to learn the spoken language, as it appeared that neither Vladimir Ilyich nor Nadezhda Konstantinovna could understand English colloquial speech.

"We thought," wrote Krupskaya,\* "we knew English, having in fact translated a thick book in Siberia from English into Russian (the Webbs's book)<sup>7</sup>. I had studied English in prison from a self-instructor, but had never heard a word of spoken English. When we started translating the Webbs in Shushenskoye Vladimir Ilyich had been horrified at my pronunciation. 'My sister had an English teacher, but she never sounded like that,' he said. I didn't argue, and started learning over again. When we arrived in London we

\* N. K. Krupskaya. *Reminiscences of Lenin*, M., F. L. P. H., 1959, p. 70.

found we could not understand a thing, nor could anybody understand us. It got us into comical situations at first. It amused Vladimir Ilyich, but at the same time put him on his mettle. He tackled English in earnest."

First of all Lenin put the following advertisement in *Athenaeum*:<sup>8</sup>

"A Russian LL.D.<sup>9</sup> (and his wife) would like to exchange Russian lessons for English with an English Gentleman (or Lady).—Address Letters to Mr. J. Richter, 30, Holford Square, Pentonville, W. C."

Very soon Vladimir Ilyich and Nadezhda Konstantinovna were in contact with three teacher-pupils. One of them was Mr. Rayment, an elderly man with a "venerable appearance" who resembled Darwin. He worked for the publishing house of George Bell and Son. Another was an office worker named Williams, the third was a manual worker, Mr. Young.

Mr. Rayment was a well-to-do businessman who had travelled all over Europe, visited Australia and other countries, but spent most of his life in England in the capital.

At the end of their residence in London Nadezhda Konstantinovna observed that Mr. Rayment was rather ignorant and that he had not seen in the capital of England even half of what Vladimir Ilyich had managed to see during his one year's stay there.

**SATURDAY, MAY 10, 19**

**UNIVERSITY MAN**, speaking French, Russian, knowing German, desires a POST as PRIVATE SECRETARY Assistant in Scientific and Literary Researches. Master to a Pup Companion - Traveller. Russian Lessons also. — Letters, A. A. Camden Street. N. W.

**A RUSSIAN LL.D. (and his Wife)** would like EXCHANGE RUSSIAN LESSONS for ENGLISH with English Gentleman (or Lady).—Address Letters Mr. J. Richter, Holford Square, Pentonville, W. C.

The advertisement in *Athenaeum*

Later on Krupskaya wrote that Mr. Rayment was a typical representative of petty-bourgeois English society.\*

"One of the Englishmen who came to us for his lessons was the manager of a large bookstore. He contended that socialism was a theory that set the most correct value on things. 'I am a convinced socialist,' he said. 'At one time I even started to make socialist speeches. Then my employer sent for me and said he had no need for socialists, and if I wanted to keep my job I would have to hold my tongue. Well, I thought, socialism is inevitable, whether I speak for it or not, and I have a wife and children to look after. I no longer tell anyone that I'm socialist, but you — I can tell.'"

Besides the help of these three teachers Lenin and Krupskaya tried to master spoken English by listening to speakers at all kinds of meetings.

They came as close as they could to the speaker and carefully watched his mouth. At the beginning of their stay in London they went to Hyde Park quite often.

Zelda Coats, who was active in the British social-democratic movement for a long time, remembers how she used to accompany Vladimir Ilyich and Nadezhda Konstantinovna to the Speakers' Corner<sup>10</sup> in Hyde Park.

Speakers harangued the strolling crowds on all kinds of subjects. One man, an atheist, tried to prove to a group of curious listeners that there was no God. Next to him a Salvation Army<sup>11</sup> officer was shouting out hysterical appeals to Almighty God, while a short distance away a salesman was holding forth about the drudgery of shop assistants in the big stores.

Zelda Coats says that Lenin was usually more interested in the listeners, ordinary Englishmen, than in the speakers. He liked to watch the reaction of the crowd. These observations were more important to him than reading some books.

But one of the speakers always attracted Lenin's attention. He spoke with an Irish accent and it was easier to understand him. Many believe that the orator with an Irish accent was none other than the young George Bernard Shaw, who often spoke in Hyde Park in those years. But to find documentary proof of this is, naturally, impossible.

\* N. K. Krupskaya. *Reminiscences of Lenin*, M., F.L.P.H., 1959, pp. 73—74.





The Speakers' Corner in Hyde Park

## **Meetings, Gatherings, Discussions**

While in London, Lenin and Krupskaya visited many gatherings and meetings in the East End. It was very important for Vladimir Ilyich to get in personal contact with ordinary working-class people, to understand their thoughts and moods, to learn everything about their life from them but not from books. "Vladimir Ilyich always felt drawn to the working-class crowd. Wherever there was a crowd he was sure to be there — whether it was an outing in the country, where the tired workers, glad to escape from the city, lay about for hours on the grass, or a public house, or the reading room. [...] It was the rank-and-file British worker, who had preserved his class instinct in face of everything, that Ilyich always relied upon. Visitors to Britain usually saw only the labour aristocracy, corrupted by the bourgeoisie and itself bourgeoisified. Naturally Ilyich studied that upper



But Vladimir Ilyich was not only a passive participant at gatherings and meetings. Lenin made reports, read papers or took part in different discussions in workers' clubs and societies.

Unfortunately, there are no accurate records of the dates, places or texts of Lenin's speeches in London, but still it is possible to get some hints of them in different documents and newspapers.

Thus, on November 29, 1902, Vladimir Ilyich read a paper criticising the programme and tactics of the Socialist Revolutionaries.

On March 18, 1903, Lenin made a speech on the Paris Commune at a workers' meeting in Whitechapel.<sup>12</sup>

Marx, Engels and Lenin all visited the German Workers' Educational Society, founded by emigrant German workers in 1840. Later it was known as the "Communist Club" and was situated at 107, Charlotte Street. In 1940 the building was demolished by a Nazi bomb.

There is evidence that Vladimir Ilyich spoke there too.

In one of the issues of *Justice* (1903) Londoners could read an article entitled,

First of May Celebration,  
Alexandra Palace  
Great Labour Festival

Besides different entertainments, there was an announcement about a continental meeting in which V. I. Lenin was to take part.

Here is the exact text of the announcement from the article:

**Continental Meeting.**—Speakers will address the meeting in their respective languages—N. Lenin (Russian), G. Loiz (French), B. Oller (Spanish), Comrade Rackow (German), Attilio Leveretto (Italian), Minas Casabian (Armenia), B. Jedrze-jowski (Polish).



However, nobody can say for sure whether V. I. Lenin made his speech on that day or not. A week later *Justice* gave a description of the Festival and reported that the weather had been awful on May Day, and that it had been pouring all day long. It's doubtful if any speakers took part in the ceremony except the local chairman who opened the indoor festival of singing and dancing.

## **"Two Nations"**

Vladimir Ilyich liked exploring London, its squares, gardens, streets. Before coming to London, Lenin had carefully studied a plan of the city. He always amazed comrades who considered themselves old-timers by his ability to find the shortest way through the labyrinth of London streets.

He liked taking long rides through the town on top of the omnibus. He liked the busy traffic of that vast commercial city, the quiet squares with their elegant houses wreathed in greenery, where only smart broughams drew up.

"There were other places too — mean little streets tenanted by London's work people, with clothes lines stretched across the road and anaemic children playing on the doorsteps. To these places we used to go on foot. Observing these startling contrasts between wealth and poverty, Ilyich would mutter in English through clenched teeth: 'Two nations'."\*

## **Highgate Cemetery**

Lenin and Krupskaya were in the habit of going for rambles in the suburbs too. More often than not they went to Primrose Hill, which in those days was quite a remote place. Vladimir Ilyich and Nadezhda Konstantinovna particularly liked walking there. The hill commanded a view of almost the whole of London — "a vast smoke-wreathed wilderness of houses". If the day was not foggy, they could clearly see the sky-line of the big commercial city, the grey massive outlines of Westminster Palace, the fine silhouette of St. Paul's Cathedral or the Tower.<sup>13</sup>

\* N. K. Krupskaya. *Reminiscences of Lenin*, M., F. L. P. H., 1959, p. 71.

In the 1880's Primrose Hill was a favourite spot for outings of K. Marx and F. Engels who lived near-by in those years.

F. Engels' residence was just opposite the Hill and he used regularly to take the short quarter-of-an-hour's walk over Primrose Hill to Marx's house in Maitland Park Road.

From Primrose Hill Lenin and Krupskaya would go to Highgate Cemetery where the Marx family were buried.

In those days the family's grave was in the remotest part of the cemetery, closely surrounded by other graves and monuments.

In 1956 the remains of the Marx family were transferred, together with the urn containing the ashes of Eleanor Marx Aveling, to another part of the cemetery. Before that the urn had stood for many years in the premises of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Great Britain. A magnificent monument to Karl Marx was erected on money gathered by international subscription. On the 14th of March, 1956, it was unveiled by Harry Pollitt.

This monument stands in a commanding position high up in the cemetery above the place where the Marx family were originally buried. The simple headstone which formerly marked the original grave has been incorporated in the new monument.

The site of the original grave has been suitably marked.

Among the many distinguished guests of London who have visited Marx's grave since the end of the war are leading statesmen and Communist Party leaders, and workers



Burial place of the Marx family in Highgate Cemetery at the beginning of the century



Monument to K. Marx on the new burial place of the Marx family

from almost all countries of the world. Not a single Soviet visitor leaves London without paying tribute to the great genius of all mankind.

On March 14, commemoration ceremonies are held annually at Highgate Cemetery.

### **Three Congresses of the RSDLP in London**

London has associations of particular interest to the Soviet people, as three of the RSDLP early Congresses were held in the metropolis. These were the famous Second Congress of the Russian Social Democrat Labour Party in July—August, 1903, the Third Congress in April, 1905, and the Fifth Congress in April—May, 1907.

### **The Second Congress of the RSDLP**

It was Lenin's passionate desire to create a centralized united solid party, thus merging into one all the detached scattered groups.



One of the main conceptions of V. I. Lenin elaborated in *What Is To Be Done?* was the publication of a central newspaper which could help greatly in the creation of such a party.

The edition of the necessary newspaper was organized, and from 1900 to 1903 *Iskra* helped to build up the party and its political line. On the basis of the work and connections of *Iskra* it became possible to call a representative Congress in 1903. Intensive preparations for the Second Congress of the RSDLP kept Lenin busy throughout the winter and spring of 1903.

In December, 1902, an organizing committee for preparing the Congress was set up, and practically all the work of communicating with the organizing committee devolved on Vladimir Ilyich.

Martov, finding London and its secluded life trying, had gone to Paris and remained there.

V. I. Lenin had great difficulties in his correspondence with Russia; his letters to Russia were filled with requests to write punctually and to act promptly.

Those weeks and months of waiting for the correspondence and the constant apprehension of everything falling through strained his nerves to the limit. In the spring of 1903 his health was in such a bad state that he developed a nervous disease, caused by inflammation of the nerve endings of the spine and chest.

As medical help was extremely expensive in England and they were short of money, Nadezhda Konstantinovna tried to cure Vladimir Ilyich herself.

"As soon as I saw the redness I looked up a medical book. I decided that it was ring-worm. Takhtarev, who had been a medical student in his fourth or fifth year, confirmed my conjecture and I painted Vladimir Ilyich with iodine, which caused him excruciating pain. It had not occurred to us to send for an English doctor, as that would have cost a guinea. Workers in England are usually their own doctors, since medical assistance is very expensive." \*

Early in May, 1903, Vladimir Ilyich left Britain for Geneva together with the other members of the *Iskra* Board.

\* N. K. Krupskaya. *Reminiscences of Lenin*, M., F.L.P.H., 1959, p. 86.

In Geneva he continued his intensive work for the organization of the Second Congress. Lenin drew up rules, planned the work of the Congress, prepared draft resolutions.

On the 17th of July, 1903, the Second Congress of the RSDLP was opened in Brussels. 43 delegates from 26 organizations were present at it. But, as R. Fox puts it,\* "The delegates very soon had a practical proof of how the upper classes limit the political rights of the proletariat. The conference hall was continually surrounded by detectives, both Belgian and Russian, two of the delegates, including Zemlyachka, a woman leader of the armed rising in 1905..., were arrested and deported. Rather than risk the identification of all the delegates and the possible deportation of some of them to Russia and the cells of the Tsarist prisons, it was decided to move the congress to London."

The sittings of the Congress were transferred to the capital of England and all the delegates left Belgium for London.

Vladimir Ilyich considered himself an "old stager" there. He acted as guide and interpreter for his fellow delegates.

The meeting place of the Congress was changed daily for conspiratorial reasons, so that the addresses are not known for sure. Its first sessions are believed to have been held somewhere in Charlotte Street, Tottenham Court Road.

Lenin took an active part in the leadership of the Congress. He was the chairman most in demand at the sessions, since he was always perfectly impartial, while Plekhanov could never refrain from interrupting speakers with whom he disagreed.

Together with his supporters, Vladimir Ilyich conducted an energetic fight for the *Iskra* policy against the opportunists.

One of the main items of the Congress was the adoption of the Party Programme. Long and heated debates took place over the draft of the Programme presented by Lenin and his supporters. Unlike the programmes of the other Socialist parties of Europe, which had been severely criticised by Marx and Engels during their lifetime, the Party Programme proposed by the Iskraists was distinguished for its revolutionary character. It was the only programme which contained the

\* R. Fox. *Lenin. A Biography*, New York, 1934, p. 101.





*V. I. Lenin Delivering a Speech at the Second Congress of the RSDLP*  
(Painting by Y. Vinogradov)



essential feature of revolutionary Marxist teaching,— the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

Besides this, Lenin's draft expressed quite a definite point of view on the alliance between the working class and the peasantry, the right of nations to self-determination and proletarian internationalism.

These basic Marxist proposals were greatly opposed by the opportunists, but all their attacks were refuted and defeated by the *Iskra* supporters.

By a majority of votes the Congress adopted a revolutionary programme. Guided by this Programme, the Party was able to wage a successful fight for the victory of the Socialist Revolution in Russia.

Sharp disagreement arose at the Congress during the discussion of the first paragraph of the Party Rules.

This was really a dispute over the kind of party which should be formed.

Lenin wanted to create a monolithic militant party, every member of which would take an active part in the revolutionary struggle and submit to Party discipline. Martov, with whom Lenin had corresponded while in exile and who had shared Lenin's plans for the creation of the Party, became the leader of a bitter opposition to Vladimir Ilyich.

Martov's formulation of the first paragraph did not include any obligations for a member of the Party, but it recognized the Party Programme.

This formulation opened the door for the entrance into the party of innumerable middle-class intellectuals, who were full of sympathy for socialism, but had no intention of fighting for it.

The atmosphere at the Congress was very tense and tiresome. But Lenin was in his element when fighting.

Giving the description of the sittings of the Congress R. Fox cites an extract from Lenin's work *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back* illustrating two attitudes towards the Congress.

He writes: \* "Some of the delegates themselves seem to have been depressed by the disputes, and Lenin, in his pamphlet *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*, tells of a conver-

\* R. Fox. *Lenin. A Biography*, New York, 1934, p. 103,

# ПРОГРАММА

## Россійской Соціалъдемократической Рабочей Партіи, принятая на второмъ съѣздѣ Партіи.

Развитіе общѣна установило такую тѣсную связь между всѣми народами цивилизованнаго міра, что великое освободительное движеніе пролетаріата должно было стать и давно уже стало международнымъ.

Считая себя однимъ изъ отрядовъ всемірной арміи пролетаріата, Россійская соціалъдемократія преслѣдуетъ ту же конечную цѣль, къ которой стремится соціалъдемократы всѣхъ другихъ странъ.

Эта конечная цѣль опредѣляется характеромъ современнаго буржуазнаго общества и ходомъ его развитія.

Главную особенность такого общества составляетъ товарное производство на основѣ капиталистическихъ производственныхъ отношеній, при которыхъ самая важная и значительная часть средствъ производства и обращенія товаровъ принадлежитъ не большому по своей численности классу лицъ, между тѣмъ какъ огромное большинство населенія состоитъ изъ пролетаріевъ и полупролетаріевъ, вынужденныхъ своимъ экономическимъ положеніемъ постоянно или періодически продавать свою рабочую силу, т. е. поступать въ наемники къ капиталистамъ и своимъ трудомъ создавать доходъ высшихъ классовъ общества.

Область господства капиталистическихъ производственныхъ отношеній все болѣе и болѣе расширяется по мѣрѣ того, какъ постоянное усовершенствованіе техники, увеличивая хозяйственное значеніе крупныхъ предпріятій, ведетъ къ вытѣсненію мелкихъ самостоятельныхъ производителей, превращая часть ихъ въ пролетаріевъ, суживая роль остальныхъ въ общественно-экономической жизни и мѣстами ставя ихъ въ болѣе или менѣе полную, болѣе или менѣе явную, болѣе или менѣе тяжелую зависимость отъ капитала.

Тотъ же техническій прогрессъ даетъ, кромѣ того, предпринимателямъ возможность все въ большихъ размѣрахъ примѣнять женскій и дѣтскій трудъ въ процессѣ производства и обращенія товаровъ. А такъ какъ, съ другой стороны, онъ приводитъ къ относительному уменьшенію потребности предпринимателей въ

sation with one of the wavering and puzzled delegates of the Centre.

“‘What a depressing atmosphere at our Congress,’ he complained to me. ‘All this fierce fighting, this agitation one against the other, these sharp polemics, this uncomradely attitude!’ ‘What a fine thing our congress is,’ I replied to him. Opportunity for open fighting Opinions expressed. Tendencies revealed. Groups defined. Hands raised. A decision taken. A stage passed through. Forward! That’s what I like! That’s life! It is something different from the endless, wearying intellectual discussions, which finish, not because people have solved the problem, but simply because they have got tired of talking.’ The comrade of the Centre looked on me as though perplexed and shrugged his shoulders. We had spoken in different languages.”

At the concluding sittings of the Congress the central directing bodies were elected.

Lenin’s supporters won the majority of votes in the elections of the Central Committee and the editorial board of *Iskra*.

But a deep cleavage had become apparent among the delegates and it remained for a long time.

“At this Congress the supporters of the *Iskra* overwhelmingly outnumbered the reactionary forces of the Economists <sup>14</sup> and of the Jewish Bund <sup>15</sup> (who were unwilling to enter a single centralized party). But a division appeared among the supporters of the *Iskra*. It is this division that developed into Bolshevism and Menshevism. The Bolsheviks, led by Lenin, at first together with Plekhanov, won the majority in the election of the Central Committee and of the Editorial Board; hence they became known as ‘the majority men’ (Bolsheviks); the Mensheviks, led by Martov, were the minority.” \*

On August 23rd, the Second Congress of the RSDLP was closed. It marked a turning point in the world working-class movement. Its historic importance lies in the fact that in spite of all the efforts of the opportunists, in spite of a cleavage, the true Iskrais could create a proletarian party of a new type, the Leninist Bolshevik Party.

\* R. P. Dutt: *The Life and Teachings of V. I. Lenin*, New York, 1936, p. 28.



### **The Third Congress of the RSDLP**

In April, 1905, V. I. Lenin visited London for the third time to attend the Third Congress of the RSDLP.

During this stay in London Vladimir Ilyich lived at 16, Percy Circus.

The exact meeting places of the sittings of the Congress are not known.

The Third Congress of the RSDLP was the first Bolshevik Congress. The Mensheviks held their separate conference in Geneva. "Two Congresses, two parties," — this is how Lenin described the situation in the RSDLP at that time.

All the basic problems of the growing revolution were discussed at the Congress. Vladimir Ilyich sharply criticised



No. 16, Percy Circus. Here V. I. Lenin lived in April — May 1905

the views and actions of the Mensheviks. He delivered several reports and drafted the main resolutions.

His speeches were so brilliant and witty that they were admired by everybody.

Describing Lenin's speech on the participation of the social-democrats in a provisional revolutionary government, Michael Tskhakaya who had opened the Third Congress, wrote:

"The entire Congress listened standing, in tense silence. The ironical logic of the theoretician, spokesman and organiser of the revolution held all the delegates spellbound.

When Ilyich finished speaking there was no end to the applause and ovations. Before us stood a great revolutionary, theoretician and tribune!"\*

The Third Congress laid down the lines of Bolshevik tactics for all its decisions. It changed the first paragraph of the Party Rules and accepted it as formulated by Lenin. The Congress condemned the Mensheviks for splitting the Party and worked out the tactical line of the Bolsheviks in the bourgeois-democratic revolution.

The Third Congress elected a Central Committee with V. I. Lenin at the head.

In June, 1962, a memorial plaque was placed on the house where Vladimir Ilyich had lived in London in April—May, 1905. It reads as follows:



\* V. I. Lenin. *A Short Biography*, M., 1963, pp. 36—37.





*V. I. Lenin Delivering a Speech at the Third Congress of the RSDLP (Painting by A. M. Lyubimov)*



## **The Fifth (London) Congress of the RSDLP**

It was in April, 1907, that the Fifth Congress of the RSDLP gathered in the capital of England. That was the reason of Lenin's fourth visit to London.

There is no doubt as to the place where the sittings of the Congress were held. It was in the Brotherhood Church, Southgate Road, Islington.

One of the most difficult problems in organizing the Congress was the financing of it. As Zelda Coats put it, two English social-democrats, George Lansbury and M. Brailsford, persuaded their friend, an American industrialist, Joseph Fels, to help the Russian social-democrats financially. In this way a loan of £ 1.700<sup>16</sup> was secured from him. Though J. Fels didn't hope to get his money back, he made a condition that all the delegates should sign the credit note. The Russian social-democrats promised to pay their debt after the Revolution. And they *did* keep their word! In 1922, when the hardships of the young Soviet Republic were greatest, the Soviet Government repaid this debt of £ 1.700.

The sittings of the Congress took place from April 30 to May 19.

There were present 336 delegates from the 147,000 members of the RSDLP, among them 105 Bolsheviks and 97 Mensheviks. V. I. Lenin directed the work of the Congress.

His report on the main item of the agenda — the attitude towards the bourgeois parties — was approved.

A vivid picture of Lenin as an orator is given by Maxim Gorky, who was present at the Congress.

Lenin "didn't try to invent fanciful phrases, each word was laid out before the audience, its exact meaning revealed with amazing ease... He took up much less time than the speakers who had gone before him, but he made a far greater impression. I was not alone in feeling this. I heard someone behind me say admiringly: 'A powerful speech that.' And so it was. Every argument of his seemed to develop of itself by virtue of the power behind it." \*

\* V. I. Lenin. *A Short Biography*, M., 1963, p. 44.



Brotherhood Church, Southgate Road, Islington

At the Congress Lenin was supported by the group of Bolshevik delegates.

They defeated the Mensheviks on a number of other issues. The Fifth Congress confirmed the correctness of the Bolshevik line in the revolution. A great victory was achieved by the Bolsheviks in the working class movement.

The Fifth Congress elected Lenin to the Central Committee of the RSDLP.

### **Lenin's Last Visit to London**

In May, 1908, V. I. Lenin came to London for the last time and stayed there for about a month. The purpose of his visit this time was to work in the British Museum Reading Room. Vladimir Ilyich greatly appreciated the treasures offered to him by the Reading Room, a regular reader of which he had been since 1902.

The British Museum was founded in 1753 with the purchase of the library and collection of Sir Hans Sloane, and of the Harleyan manuscripts.<sup>17</sup> A public lottery was organized to get the necessary funds with which to buy them. Many valuable libraries and collections were added later and soon the British Museum became one of the most extensive and valuable in West Europe.

The present building of the Museum was erected between the years 1823 and 1847 on the site of the former one. The famous Reading Room of the British Museum was built in 1857. It is a huge circular hall, accomodating from 450 to 500 readers. The dome is 140 feet in diameter and 106 feet high. There are two concentric circles in the middle of the room, in the inner one sit the officials.

The printed Catalogue, consisting of about 1,400 volumes, is ranged round the outer and inner circles. The readers sit at the desks, radiating from the centre of the hall.

All the seats are arranged in rows under the indexes A, B, C, D, etc., each seat having its own number: 1, 2, 3, 4... The books in demand are delivered to the desks, the index being indicated in the requirements (A<sub>3</sub>, C<sub>6</sub>, R<sub>8</sub>...).





Reading Room of the British Museum



Plan of the Reading Room

About 25,000 of the volumes most in request, such as dictionaries, encyclopedias, bibliographies, etc. are ranged round the Room itself and may be consulted without filling up a form. By an Act of Parliament a copy of every book published in the United Kingdom must be sent here.

Persons desiring to become readers of the Reading Room must apply to the Director, specifying the purpose for which they wish to use the library. The letter should enclose a recommendation from a person of recognised position. Admission tickets are usually renewable every twelve months, and are not granted to persons under 21 years of age.



1 Henry  
RR.  
25. 4. 1902

1902

30 Holford Square  
Pentonville N.1.

Sir,

I beg to apply for a ticket  
of admission to the Reading Room  
of the British Museum. I came  
from Russia in order to study  
the land question. I enclose  
the reference letter of Mr.  
Mitchell.

Believe me, Sir, to  
be Yours faithfully  
Jacob Richter

April 21 1902

To the Director of the Bri-  
tish Museum.

V. I. Lenin's letter of application to the director of the British Museum for permission to use the Reading Room



When Lenin arrived in London in 1902, he immediately applied to the Director of the British Museum with the following letter, accompanied by a letter of recommendation of Mr. Mitchell;

30 Holford Square  
Pentonville W. C.

Sir,

I beg to apply for a ticket of admission to the Reading Room of the British Museum. I came from Russia in order to study the land question. I enclose the reference letter of Mr Mitchell.

Believe me, Sir, to be yours faithfully,  
*Jacob Richter*

April 21, 1902

To the Director of the British Museum  
To the Director of the Reading Room

Dear Sir,

I have pleasure in recommending Mr. Jacob Richter, LL.D., St. Petersburg, for admission to the Reading Room. My friend's purpose in requesting admission is to study the land question; I trust you will be able to comply with this request.

*I. H. Mitchell*  
Lyndean, Voltaire St.,  
S. W. Clapham

There were, however, difficulties in granting admission because of Mr. Mitchell's address. The street where he lived had been renamed but not yet reregistered in the directory. Vladimir Ilyich had to write a second letter:

30, Holford Square  
Pentonville W. C.

Sir,

In addition to my letter and with reference to your information No 4332 I enclose the new recommendation of Mr. Mitchell.

Yours faithfully,  
*Jacob Richter*

24 April, 1902

Mr. Mitchell wrote a second letter too, explaining that, "with reference to my recommendation of Mr. Richter for admission to the Reading Room the difficulty no doubt arises through the street where I reside, Voltaire Street, Clapham,

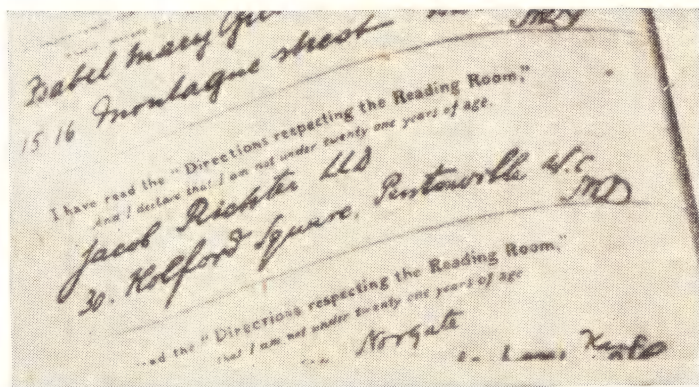
being only recently rebuilt, and may not yet be in the directory."

On April 28th, 1902, Lenin was informed by the Director that a "Reading Room Ticket" would be delivered to him on presenting this note to the clerk in the Reading Room, within 6 months from the above date.

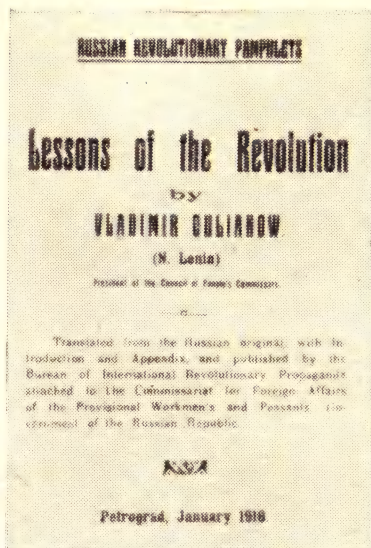
On April 29th, 1902, Vladimir Ilyich signed a declaration that he had read the Reading Room regulations and that he was not under 21 years of age. Only after all these formalities had been complied with Lenin was given a Reader's Ticket No 72453, which was valid for 3 months from the above date.

Though Vladimir Ilyich had no permanent place in the hall, his favourite seat is believed to have been in R(7/8) row. A number of memoirs recount how Lenin, like Marx before him, was attached to the library of the British Museum.

He spent much of his time working in the Reading Room during his first year of residence in London in 1902—1903; he came especially to work in the library in May, 1908. That was his last, fifth visit to the metropolis. In 1908 Lenin lived in Geneva making preparations for his great creative work against philosophical revisionism, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. While creating this work Vladimir Ilyich stud-



V. I. Lenin's signature in the register "Directions Respecting the Reading Room"



The very first pamphlet by  
V. I. Lenin in English

ied more than 200 books in foreign languages: 135 in German, 39 in English, 26 in French. Besides, he looked through a host of articles on physics, biology, history and philosophy. In May 1908, Lenin was in need of some books which he couldn't get in the libraries of Geneva and Zürich. Then he decided to go to London to the Reading Room of the British Museum.

In the early 30's one could meet in the Reading Room an old attendant, who remembered Lenin. J. Klugmann writes: "Nor were those who worked there quick to forget Lenin.

I remember when, as a student I first started to work in the library in the early thirties, showing a picture of Lenin to the old custodian at the door of the library, who prided himself on never forgetting faces. 'Such a nice gentleman, he said, 'What has become of him? He has not been here for a long time.' " \*

Frank Jackson, foundation member of the CPGB recalls how he used to meet and speak to the old attendant of the Reading Room who remembered Vladimir Ilyich under the name of J. Richter. This attendant described Mr. Richter as a small man with a round head, whom he used to bring heaps of books to and who always spoke kindly to him and inquired after his family.

In December, 1954, the Museum authorities arranged an exhibition of some rare copies of books and documents. Among the displays were the Registration Book of 1902, opened on the page where Vladimir Ilyich signed his name,

\* From *Marxism Today*, May 1960, London, pp. 150—151,



and *Reminiscences of Lenin* by N. K. Krupskaya, in Russian and in English.

Lenin paid no more visits to England, but he followed closely all the political and social developments in Britain, especially the problems facing the British Labour Movement.

Lenin played a great part in assisting the formation of the Communist Party of Great Britain, which was founded in August, 1920.

His letters to the Marxist organizations, his discussions with individual leaders, his advice in books and pamphlets, such as *Left-Wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder* (one of the earliest of his works to have been translated into English)<sup>18</sup> helped to spread clarity and understanding of the need for and the nature of a revolutionary Marxist Party in Britain.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Один из центральных железнодорожных вокзалов в Лондоне.

<sup>2</sup> Под именем мистера и миссис Рихтер Владимир Ильич и Надежда Константиновна жили в Лондоне в 1902—1903 годах. Фамилию Рихтер В. И. Ленин «заготовил» еще до приезда в Лондон. В письме из Мюнхена он писал Н. А. Алексеєву, проживавшему в Лондоне, что на имя Алексеєва будут приходить письма для некоего Якоба Рихтера и что эти письма предназначены для него — Владимира Ильича.

<sup>3</sup> Орган Социал-демократической федерации (см. прим. 6 на стр. 9).

<sup>4</sup> Ист-Энд — восточный район Лондона, в котором живут рабочие и беднота. Этот район Энгельс называл самым обширным и самым бедным рабочим кварталом в мире.

<sup>5</sup> В настоящее время — г. Днепропетровск.

<sup>6</sup> До революции Владимир Ильич подписывался под некоторыми своими работами не просто Ленин, а Н. Ленин. И после революции первое издание сочинений Владимира Ильича вышло под псевдонимом Н. Ленин (В. Ульянов). В зарубежной печати в 20-х годах Ленина часто называли Николай. Сам он так никогда не подписывался, хотя, возможно, Н. — это инициал конспиративной клички Ленина (Николай Петрович) в период его жизни в Петербурге (1893—1895).

<sup>7</sup> Имеется в виду книга известных английских общественных деятелей супругов Сиднея Вебб (1859—1947) и Беатрисы Вебб (1852—1943), которые написали совместно ряд трудов по истории английского рабочего движения. Книга «Индустриальная демократия» (1897) была издана в России под названием «Теория и практика английского тред-юнионизма» (1900—1901). Первый том этого труда был переведен на русский язык В. И. Лениным, перевод второго тома он отредактировал.

Супруги Вебб относились с большой симпатией к Советскому государству. Их последняя книга «Правда о Советской России»

(1942) пользовалась большим успехом в прогрессивных кругах Англии.

<sup>8</sup> The Athenaeum. Journal of English and Foreign Literature, Science, the Fine Arts, Music and Drama (athenaum ['æθɪ,ni:əm] — научный или литературный клуб).

<sup>9</sup> Legum Doctor (лат.) — доктор прав.

<sup>10</sup> Гайд Парк — большой парк в центре города. По воскресеньям после полудня в одном из его четырех углов — Уголке ораторов — обычно собираются толпы гуляющих лондонцев и иностранцев послушать «ораторов». Сюда каждый может принести самодельную маленькую трибунку или воспользоваться уже имеющейся и выступать на любую интересующую его тему.

<sup>11</sup> «Армия спасения» — международная реакционная христианская филантропическая организация, основанная в Лондоне в 1865 году методистским священником Бутсом. Ведет клеветническую пропаганду и является одним из орудий агрессивной политики империалистов.

<sup>12</sup> Район Ист-Энда, населенный преимущественно евреями-эмигрантами. Тесные грязные улочки, мелкие лавчонки и мастерские — характерные черты этого района.

<sup>13</sup> Вестминстерский дворец, в котором помещаются обе палаты парламента; собор св. Павла, построенный по проекту архитектора Рена в 1697 году; Тауэр — одно из древнейших зданий Лондона — сначала крепость, затем — тюрьма, а в настоящее время — музей.

<sup>14</sup> Последователи «экономизма» — оппортунистического течения в русской социал-демократии конца XIX — начала XX века, направленного против революционного марксизма. «Экономисты» утверждали, что рабочие должны вести только экономическую борьбу, отрицали политическую борьбу рабочего класса, выступали против создания самостоятельной политической партии рабочего класса.

<sup>15</sup> Бунд — всеобщий еврейский социал-демократический союз, мелкобуржуазная, националистическая организация, стоявшая по всем вопросам революционного движения на меньшевистских позициях.

При создании РСДРП на II съезде делегаты Бунда покинули заседание и не участвовали в выборах центральных органов партии. Делегаты Бунда принимали участие в работе IV и V съездов РСДРП и в заседаниях пленума ЦК РСДРП в 1910 году. В 1912 году Бунд не признал решений Пражской конференции и с этого момента не считался входящим в состав РСДРП.

<sup>16</sup> £ — round — фунт стерлингов.

<sup>17</sup> Ганс Слоун (1660—1753) — ученый, известный врач, по происхождению шотландец. Слоун собрал замечательную коллекцию книг и антикварных вещей. Его музей был куплен на средства, полученные от национальной лотереи. Роберт Харли (1661—1724) — известный английский политический деятель. Занимался литературой и коллекционированием редких манускриптов.

<sup>18</sup> Первым произведением В. И. Ленина, переведенным на английский язык, была работа «Уроки революции» (1918).

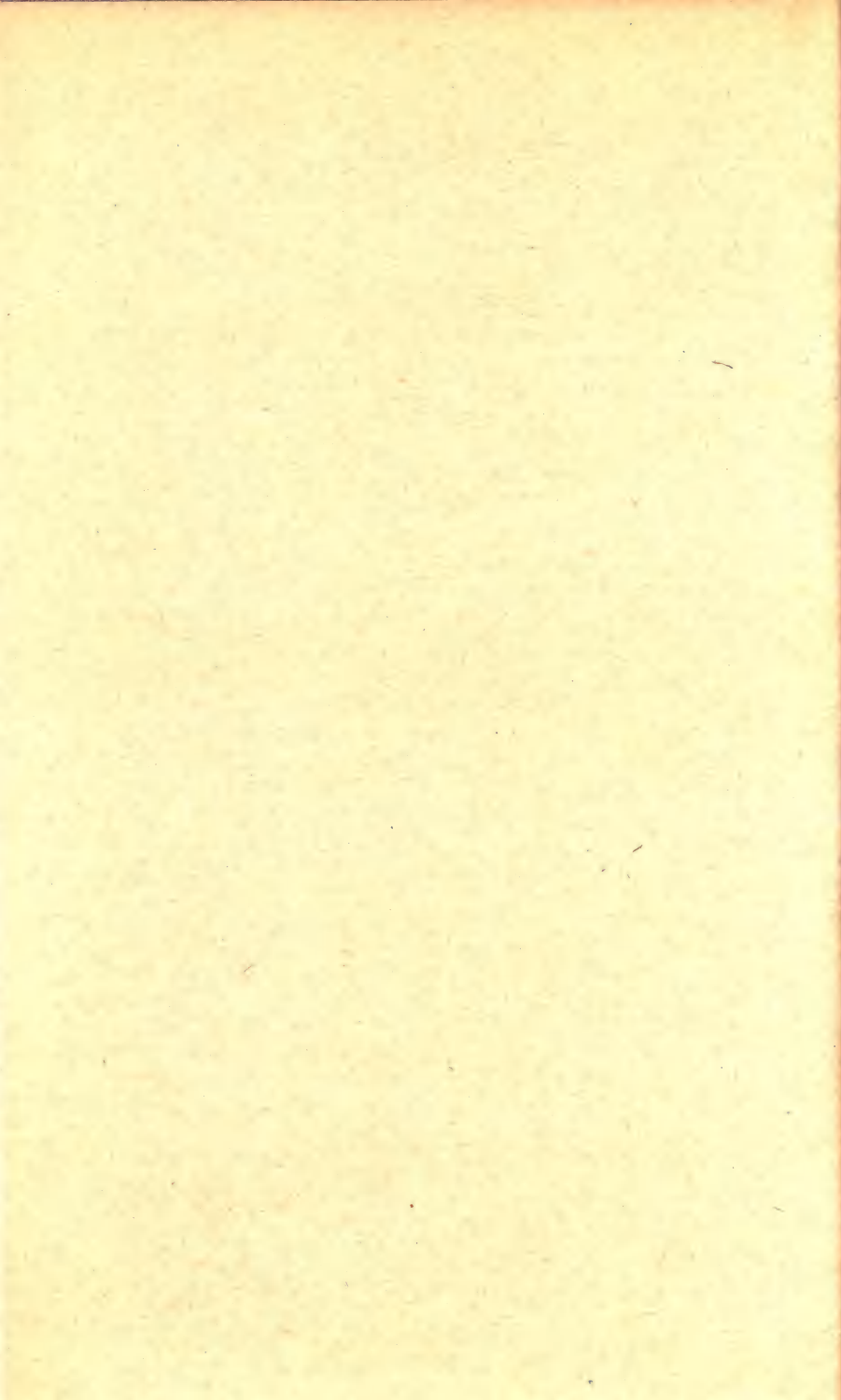
# British Contemporaries on Lenin



"That day on which I met Comrade  
Lenin was the greatest of my Life."

*Harry Pollitt*





# W. Gallacher

## I Meet Lenin

**E**ARLY in 1920 the question of unity and the formation of a Communist Party in Britain as a section of the Third International was being widely discussed and already considerable advances had been made by certain parties and groups of parties. These comprised the B.S.P.,<sup>1</sup> a strong section of the S.L.P.,<sup>2</sup> including its foremost leaders, Sylvia Pankhurst's group around the *Workers Dreadnought*<sup>3</sup> and a group of Left I.L.P.'ers.<sup>4</sup>

But while these were negotiating in London, the movement was taking a different course in Glasgow and in other parts of Scotland.

The shop stewards' movement<sup>5</sup> had a strong antiparliamentary bias, while the Glasgow S.L.P. was violently opposed to its own leaders associating with the B.S.P. Associated with them was a group formed around John McLean, who had broken from the B.S.P. and was now pursuing a course of his own.

Amongst all of these the idea of a Scottish Party free from the opportunism and corruption that was — rightly or wrongly — associated with London, rapidly gained ground.

I had been invited to attend the second congress of the Communist International<sup>6</sup> as the representative of the Clyde shop stewards, and in July 1920 I left for Moscow. As I had no passport, I had to get in touch with a comrade in Newcastle in order to be "put wise" for smuggling myself aboard a Norwegian boat. Without a passport I could not travel as a passenger. I had to travel as a stowaway. I had a week hanging about the Newcastle docks before I succeeded,

with the help of a fireman who was a party comrade, in stowing myself safely away on a ship bound for Bergen. Six hours before the ship sailed I was aboard and I counted every minute of it always expecting to be dragged out and handed over to the police. From Bergen, with the assistance of the party there, I sailed as a passenger to Vardo<sup>7</sup> and from there in a little motor fishing boat, across a strip of the Arctic Sea to Murmansk. From Murmansk I went to St. Petersburg (now Leningrad) where the Congress had to open, but by the time I got there the opening had already taken place and the congress had moved on to Moscow. With little delay I got to Moscow and was soon engaged in discussions which completely altered my views on revolutionary politics.

But this change did not take place in any easy manner. At that time the shop stewards' movement was still comparatively strong and I had little regard for parties and still less regard for parliament and parliamentarians. I was an outstanding example of the "Left" sectarian and as such had been referred to by Lenin in his book *Left-Wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder*.

But here I was in the company of Lenin himself and other leading international figures, arguing and fighting on the correctness or otherwise of these views. I was hard to convince. I had such disgust at the leaders of the Labour Party and their shameless servility that I wanted to keep clear of contamination.

Gradually, as the discussions went on, I began to see the weakness of my position. More and more the clear simple arguments and explanations of Lenin impressed themselves in my mind. When I got back to Glasgow I tried to give the comrades some idea of how I felt when talking with Lenin. I had never had such an experience with anyone before. Here was a man on whom the eyes of the world were turned. A man who was making history, great history, yet simple, unaffected, a true comrade in the deepest meaning of the word. Not for a moment could I dream of talking about him — to him. I couldn't even think of him when he was talking to me. The remarkable thing about Lenin was the complete subordination of self. His whole mind, his whole being, was centred in the revolution. So when I spoke to Lenin, I had to think not of him, but of what he was thinking—about the revolutionary struggle of the workers. [...]



The more I talked with Lenin and the other comrades, the more I came to see what the party of the workers meant in the revolutionary struggle. It was in this, the conception of the party, that the genius of Lenin had expressed itself. A Party of revolutionary workers, with its roots in the factories and in the streets, winning the Trade Unions and the Co-operatives with the correctness of its working-class policy, a party with no other interests but the interests of the working class and the peasant and petty-bourgeois allies of the working class, such a Party, using every avenue of expression, could make an exceptionally valuable parliamentary platform for arousing the great masses of workers to energetic struggle against the capitalist enemy.

Before I left Moscow I had an interview with Lenin during which he asked me three questions.

"Do you admit you were wrong on the question of Parliament and affiliations to the Labour Party?"

"Will you join the Communist Party of Great Britain when you return?"

(A telegram had arrived a couple of days before, informing us of the formation of the Party.)

"Will you do your best to persuade your Scottish comrades to join it?"

To each of these questions I answered "yes". Having given this pledge freely I returned to Glasgow.

From *Revolt on the Clyde. An Autobiography*,  
London, 1936, pp. 249—253.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The British Socialist Party — Британская социалистическая партия, преемница SDF (подробнее см. прим. 6 на стр. 9).

<sup>2</sup> The Socialist Labour Party — Социалистическая рабочая партия; в начале XX века — левое крыло SDF.

<sup>3</sup> Орган Социалистической федерации рабочих (The Workers' Socialist Federation), которую возглавляла Сильвия Панкхерст.

<sup>4</sup> The Independent Labour Party — Независимая рабочая партия.

<sup>5</sup> движение цеховых профсоюзных старост

<sup>6</sup> Второй конгресс III Интернационала, который состоялся в июле — августе 1920 года в Петрограде и Москве.

<sup>7</sup> Бårdē — порт в Норвегии,

# W. Gallacher

## Reminiscences of Lenin

ON MONDAY, with other delegates, I made my way to the Kremlin and to my first acquaintance with an international congress.

In the main hall groups of delegates were standing chatting and arguing.

We passed through into a side room where delegates sat drinking tea, writing reports or preparing speeches. I was introduced to delegates from this and that country and then I got into a group and someone said:

"This is Comrade Lenin," just like that.

I held out my hand and said, "Hello!" I was stuck for anything else to say.

He said, with a smile, as he was told that I was Comrade Gallacher from Glasgow:

"We are very pleased to have you at our congress."

I said something about being glad to be there and then we went on talking about other things. I kept saying to myself: "Christ, there's war everywhere, there are internal problems and external problems that would almost seem insurmountable. Yet here is a comrade supremely confident that the Bolsheviks can carry through to victory." Lenin joked and laughed with the comrades and occasionally when I said something he would look at me in a quaint way. I later discovered that this was in consequence of my English. He had a difficulty in understanding it.<sup>1</sup>

I immediately felt that I was talking, not to some "far-away great" man hedged around with an impassable barrier

of airs, but to Lenin, the great Party comrade who had a warm smile and cheery word for every proletarian fighter.

When I got going in the discussions on the political resolution and the trade union resolution, I got a very rough handling. Some of my best arguments were simply riddled. My opponents, when I got up to speak, never missed a chance of "cutting in". Naturally I would snap back at them and things sometimes got very hot. As I felt the ground slipping away from beneath my feet I got very bad tempered. But Lenin, while carrying on an irreconcilable criticism in principle of my line, would always take the opportunity of saying something helpful, something that took away a lot of the soreness from the difficult position my wrong ideas had rushed me into.

From *We Have Met Lenin*, M., F. L. P. H., 1939,  
pp. 29—30.

#### NOTE

<sup>1</sup> В. И. Ленин недостаточно хорошо понимал т. Галлахера, видимо, потому, что тот говорил с шотландским акцентом.



# W. Gallacher

## The Last Memory

IT WAS arranged that John Reed and I should go to Baku to the Toilers of the East Congress there. Then a message came to the hotel, Lenin wanted to see me. Off I went to the Kremlin.

"When can you go home?" he asked me.

"I'm going to Baku," I replied.

He smiled and nodded his head in a negative way.

"There is a big movement developing in Britain," he said. "Councils of Action have been set up to stop the attack that is being made against us. You ought to get back as quickly as possible. Do you agree?"

"I agree," I answered.

"When can you go then?" he asked.

"Tomorrow, if you like," I replied.

He smiled broader than ever.

"Why not tonight?" he said. "You could catch the night train."

"All right," I said, "tonight, I've nothing to pack."

"Good," he said, standing up and holding out his hand, "be very careful on the way back, when you get to Britain we'll look to you as a loyal fighter for the revolution and the Communist International."

We shook hands very warmly, then I went on my way. That is the last memory I have of our great Comrade Lenin.

From *We Have Met Lenin*, M., F. L. P. H., 1939,  
pp. 33—34,

# G. Lansbury

## The Inspiring Spirit of Russia

I MET him (Lenin — *Ed.*) on the day of my 61st birthday. I found him in a quite plain room in one of the big places of the Kremlin: no flunkies announced my arrival, and although soldiers guarded the outer entrances to the palace, his rooms were quite unguarded.

There were groups of women clerks working away on typewriting machines, but an absolute lack of ostentation of any sort or kind pervaded the building. I contrasted the sort of study in which I found him with that used by cabinet ministers in this or any other country. Here I was face to face with the man who was centre of the greatest revolution in the history of the world, foremost leader in the re-organisation and rebuilding of the life of a nation comprising over 100 million human beings, beset on all sides by open enemies and false friends [...]

It was hard to realise that this was the man who was carrying on his shoulders the tremendous burden which a starving, disease stricken nation imposed.

When I saw him he had just recovered from a serious illness, and yet he was cheerful and apparently vigorous; not for one moment did conversation on his side flag, nor for an instant did he hesitate to answer the most direct, clear-cut questions in a straightforward, honest manner. Cabinet Ministers in other countries would have talked of their troubles, of their difficulties, would have surrounded themselves with a

group of officials to prevent the possibility of any mistake in their answering of questions: but Lenin takes the field alone, and this because he is not a diplomat — that is, he does not use language of a double meaning but wants you to understand what he means. He hates compromise. He will not accept the pacifist view of life because he believes that the possessing classes will inevitably compel the workers to fight. He emphasised this again and again: "You and the workers may not want to fight but the capitalist class will make you fight: they will never concede to reason what they will be obliged to concede to force."

As I watched him I wondered what was the source of his strength, because there was strength written all over him, mental and moral strength came with every word he spoke. [...]

I believe his strength comes because he is absolutely impersonal. He is the best hated and the best loved man in the world, but I believe he is absolutely indifferent both to love and hatred.— I do not mean that he has no feeling, because I am confident that he loves little children, but in the pursuit of the cause of socialism he cannot be thwarted or turned one side or the other by personal considerations of any kind. He would go to the scaffold as calmly as to a meeting of his cabinet. He is not the "boss" of Russia, but he is the inspiring spirit of Russia. [...]

[...] He is a doer of the word, not a mere talker. While talking with him it was impossible to imagine that such a man would love or care for violence or butchery, torture or any of the other horrors which are laid to his charge. He is too big in his outlook and much too wide in his sympathies to want to kill anyone. The thing, however, that causes his great determination is the fact that he has travelled, not merely in Russia but throughout the world, and understands theoretically and practically what a cursed thing capitalism can be; he has suffered with the workers, and to suffer together is the cement of human friendships — he understands these things. [...]

Those who would be his friends must be as pure hearted as he: he has no room for any of us who are half and half, he wants us to be one thing or the other. [...]

[...] To-day Lenin is symbolic of a new spirit. He is in very deed a father of his people — a father who toils for



them, thinks for them, acts for them, suffers with them and is ready to stand in danger or in safety struggling on their behalf. Tens of thousands of men and women love him and would die for him because he is their comrade, their champion in the cause of social and economic freedom.

From *What I Saw in Russia*, London, 1920,  
pp. 23—28.

# H. G. Wells

## Russia in the Shadows

### VI. The Dreamer in the Kremlin

**M**Y chief purpose in going from Petersburg to Moscow was to see and talk to Lenin. I was very curious to see him, and I was disposed to be hostile to him. I encountered a personality entirely different from anything I had expected to meet. [...]

Moscow under the bright October sunshine, amidst the fluttering yellow leaves, impressed us as being altogether more lax and animated than Petersburg. There is much more movement of people, more trading, and a comparative plenty of droshkys. Markets are open. There is not the same general ruination of streets and houses. There are, it is true, many traces of the desperate street fighting of early 1918. One of the domes of that absurd cathedral of St. Basil just outside the Kremlin gate was smashed by a shell and still awaits repair. The tramcars we found were not carrying passengers; they were being used for the transport of supplies of food and fuel. In these matters Petersburg claims to be better prepared than Moscow.

The ten thousand crosses of Moscow still glitter in the afternoon light. On one conspicuous pinnacle of the Kremlin the imperial eagles spread their wings; the Bolshevik Government has been too busy or too indifferent to pull them down. The churches are open, the kissing of ikons is a flourishing industry, and beggars still woo casual charity at the doors. The celebrated miraculous shrine of the Iberian Madonna outside the Redeemer Gate was particularly busy.<sup>1</sup> There were many peasant women, unable to get into the little chapel, kissing the stones outside.

Just opposite to it, on a plaster panel on a house front, is that now celebrated inscription put up by one of the early revolutionary administrations in Moscow: "Religion is the Opium of the People". The effect this inscription produces is greatly reduced by the fact that in Russia the people cannot read.

About that inscription I had a slight but amusing argument with Mr. Vanderlip, the American financier, who was lodged in the same guest house as ourselves. He wanted to have it effaced. I was for retaining it as being historically interesting, and because I think that religious toleration should extend to atheists. But Mr. Vanderlip felt too strongly to see the point of that.

The Moscow Guest House, which we shared with Mr. Vanderlip and an adventurous English artist [...], was a big, richly-furnished house upon the Sofiskaya Naberezhnaya (No. 17), directly facing the great wall of the Kremlin and all the clustering domes and pinnacles of that imperial inner city. We felt much less free and more secluded here than in Petersburg. There were sentinels at the gates to protect us from casual visitors, whereas in Petersburg all sorts of unauthorised persons could and did stray in to talk to me. Mr. Vanderlip had been staying here, I gathered, for some weeks, and proposed to stay some weeks more. He was without valet, secretary or interpreter. He did not discuss his business with me beyond telling me rather carefully once or twice that it was strictly financial and commercial and in no sense political. I was told that he had brought credentials from Senator Harding to Lenin, but I am temperamentally incurious and I made no attempt whatever to verify this statement or to pry into Mr. Vanderlip's affairs. I did not even ask how it could be possible to conduct business or financial operations in a Communist State with any one but the Government, nor how it was possible to deal with a Government upon strictly non-political lines. These were, I admitted, mysteries beyond my understanding. But we ate, smoked, drank our coffee and conversed together in an atmosphere of profound discretion. By not mentioning Mr. Vanderlip's "mission", we made it a portentous, omnipresent fact.

The arrangements leading up to my meeting with Lenin were tedious and irritating, but at last I found myself under way for the Kremlin in the company of Mr. Rothstein,



formerly a figure in London Communist circles, and an American comrade with a large camera who was also, I gathered, an official of the Russian Foreign Office.

The Kremlin as I remembered it in 1914 was a very open place, open much as Windsor Castle<sup>2</sup> is, with a thin trickle of pilgrims and tourists in groups and couples flowing through it. [...]

We got to Lenin at last and found him, a little figure at a great desk in a well-lit room that looked out upon palatial spaces. I thought his desk was rather in a litter. I sat down on a chair at a corner of the desk, and the little man — his feet scarcely touch the ground as he sits on the edge of his chair — twisted round to talk to me, putting his arms round and over a pile of papers. He spoke excellent English, but it was, I thought, rather characteristic of the present condition of Russian affairs that Mr. Rothstein chaperoned the conversation, occasionally offering footnotes and other assistance. Meanwhile the American got to work with his camera, and unobtrusively but persistently exposed plates. The talk, however, was too interesting for that to be an annoyance. One forgot about that clicking and shifting about quite soon.

I had come expecting to struggle with a doctrinaire Marxist. I found nothing of the sort. I had been told that Lenin lectured people; he certainly did not do so on this occasion. Much has been made of his laugh in the descriptions, a laugh which is said to be pleasing at first and afterwards to become cynical. This laugh was not in evidence. His forehead reminded me of someone else — I could not remember who it was, until the other evening I saw Mr. Arthur Balfour sitting and talking under a shaded light. It is exactly the same domed, slightly one-sided cranium. Lenin has a pleasant, quick-changing, brownish face, with a lively smile and a habit (due perhaps to some defect in focussing) of screwing up one eye as he pauses in his talk; he is not very like the photographs you see of him because he is one of those people whose change of expression is more important than their features; he gesticulated a little with his hands over the heaped papers as he talked, and he talked quickly, very keen on his subject, without any posing or pretences or reservations, as a good type of scientific man will talk.

Our talk was threaded throughout and held together by two — what shall I call them? — *motifs*. One was from me

to him: "What do you think you are making of Russia? What is the state you are trying to create?" The other was from him to me: "Why does not the social revolution begin in England? Why do you not work for the social revolution? Why are you not destroying Capitalism and establishing the Communist State?" These *motifs* interwove, reacted on each other, illuminated each other. The second brought back the first: "But what are you making of the social revolution? Are you making a success of it?" And from that we got back to two again with: "To make it a success the Western world must join in. Why doesn't it?"

In the days before 1918 all the Marxist world thought of the social revolution as an end. The workers of the world were to unite, overthrow Capitalism, and be happy ever afterwards. But in 1918 the Communists, to their own surprise, found themselves in control of Russia and challenged to produce their millennium.<sup>3</sup> They have a colourable excuse for a delay in the production of a new and better social order in their continuation of war conditions, in the blockade and so forth, nevertheless it is clear that they begin to realise the tremendous unpreparedness which the Marxist methods of thought involve. At a hundred points — I have already put a finger upon one or two of them — they do not know what to do. But the commonplace Communist simply loses his temper if you venture to doubt whether everything is being done in precisely the best and most intelligent way under the new régime. He is like a tetchy housewife who wants you to recognise that everything is in perfect order in the middle of an eviction. He is like one of those now forgotten suffragettes<sup>4</sup> who used to promise us an earthly paradise as soon as we escaped from the tyranny of "man-made laws". Lenin, on the other hand, whose frankness must at times leave his disciples breathless, has recently stripped off the last pretence that the Russian revolution is anything more than the inauguration of an age of limitless experiment. "Those who are engaged in the formidable task of overcoming capitalism," he has recently written, "must be prepared to try method after method until they find the one which answers their purpose best."

We opened our talk with a discussion of the future of the great towns under Communism. I wanted to see how far Lenin contemplated the dying out of the towns in Russia. The desolation of Petersburg had brought home to me a point



I had never realised before, that the whole form and arrangement of a town is determined by shopping and marketing, and that the abolition of these things renders nine tenths of the buildings in an ordinary town directly or indirectly unmeaning and useless. "The towns will get very much smaller," he admitted. "They will be different. Yes, quite different." That, I suggested, implied a tremendous task. It meant the scrapping of the existing towns and their replacement. The churches and great buildings of Petersburg would become presently like those of Novgorod the Great or like the temples of Paestum. Most of the town would dissolve away. He agreed quite cheerfully. I think it warmed his heart to find someone who understood a necessary consequence of collectivism that many even of his own people fail to grasp. Russia has to be rebuilt fundamentally, has to become a new thing...

And industry has to be reconstructed — as fundamentally?

Did I realise what was already in hand with Russia? The electrification of Russia?

For Lenin, who like a good orthodox Marxist denounces all "Utopians", has succumbed at last to a Utopia, the Utopia of the electricians. He is throwing all his weight into a scheme for the development of great power stations in Russia to serve whole provinces with light, with transport, and industrial power. Two experimental districts he said had already been electrified. Can one imagine a more courageous project in a vast flat land of forests and illiterate peasants, with no water power, with no technical skill available, and with trade and industry at the last gasp? Projects for such an electrification are in process of development in Holland and they have been discussed in England, and in those densely-populated and industrially highly-developed centres one can imagine them as successful, economical, and altogether beneficial. But their application to Russia is an altogether greater strain upon the constructive imagination. I cannot see anything of the sort happening in this dark crystal of Russia, but this little man at the Kremlin can; he sees the decaying railways replaced by a new electric transport, sees new roadways spreading throughout the land, sees a new and happier Communist industrialism arising again. While I talked to him he almost persuaded me to share his vision,



"And you will go on to these things with the peasants rooted in your soil?"

But not only are the towns to be rebuilt; every agricultural landmark is to go.

"Even now," said Lenin, "All the agricultural production of Russia is not peasant production. We have, in places, large scale agriculture. The Government is already running big estates with workers instead of peasants, where conditions are favourable. That can spread. It can be extended first to one province, then another. The peasants in the other provinces, selfish and illiterate, will not know what is happening until their turn comes..."

It may be difficult to defeat the Russian peasant *en masse*; <sup>5</sup> but in detail there is no difficulty at all. At the mention of the peasant Lenin's head came nearer to me; his manner became confidential. As if after all the peasant *might* overhear.

It is not only the material organisation of society you have to build, I argued, it is the mentality of a whole people. The Russian people are by habit and tradition traders and individualists; their very souls must be remoulded if this new world is to be achieved. Lenin asked me what I had seen of the educational work afoot. I praised some of the things I had seen. He nodded and smiled with pleasure. He has an unlimited confidence in his work.

"But these are only sketches and beginnings," I said.

"Come back and see what we have done in Russia in ten years' time," he answered.

In him I realised that Communism could after all, in spite of Marx, be enormously creative. After the tiresome class-war fanatics I had been encountering among the Communists, men of formulae as sterile as flints, <sup>6</sup> after numerous experiences of the trained and empty conceit of the common Marxist devotee, this amazing little man, with his frank admission of the immensity and complication of the project of Communism and his simple concentration upon its realisation, was very refreshing. He at least has a vision of a world changed over and planned and built afresh.

He wanted more of my Russian impressions. I told him that I thought that in many directions, and more particularly in the Petersburg Commune, Communism was pressing too hard and too fast, and destroying before it was ready to

rebuild. They had broken down trading before they were ready to ration; the co-operative organisation had been smashed up instead of being utilised, and so on. That brought us to our essential difference, the difference of the Evolutionary Collectivist and Marxist, the question whether the social revolution is, in its extremity, necessary, whether it is necessary to overthrow one economic system completely before the new one can begin. I believe that through a vast sustained educational campaign the existing Capitalist system can be *civilised* into a Collectivist world system; Lenin on the other hand tied himself years ago to the Marxist dogmas of the inevitable class war, the downfall of Capitalist order as a prelude to reconstruction, the proletarian dictatorship, and so forth. He had to argue, therefore, that modern Capitalism is incurably predatory, wasteful, and unteachable, and that until it is destroyed it will continue to exploit the human heritage stupidly and aimlessly, that it will fight against and prevent any administration of natural resources for the general good, and that, because essentially it is a scramble, it will inevitably make wars.

I had, I will confess, a very uphill argument. He suddenly produced Chiozza Money's new book. *The Triumph of Nationalisation*, which he had evidently been reading very carefully. "But you see directly you begin to have a good working collectivist organisation of any public interest, the Capitalists smash it up again. They smashed your national shipyards; they won't let you work your coal economically." He tapped the book. "It is all here."

And against my argument that wars sprang from nationalist imperialism and not from a Capitalist organisation of society he suddenly brought. "But what do you think of this new Republican Imperialism that comes to us from America?"

Here Mr. Rothstein intervened in Russian with an objection that Lenin swept aside.

And regardless of Mr. Rothstein's plea for diplomatic reserve, Lenin proceeded to explain the projects with which one American at least was seeking to dazzle the imagination of Moscow. There was to be economic assistance for Russia and recognition of the Bolshevik Government. There was to be a defensive alliance against Japanese aggression in Siberia. There was to be an American naval station on the coast

of Asia, and leases for long terms of sixty or fifty years of the natural resources of Khamchatka and possibly of other large regions of Russian Asia. Well, did I think that made for peace? Was it anything more than the beginning of a new world scramble? How would the British Imperialists like this sort of thing?

Always, he insisted, Capitalism competes and scrambles. It is the antithesis of collective action. It cannot develop into social unity or into world unity.

But some industrial power had to come in and help Russia, I said. She cannot reconstruct now without such help...

Our multifarious argumentation ended indecisively. We parted warmly, and I and my companion were filtered out of the Kremlin through one barrier after another in much the same fashion as we had been filtered in.

"He is wonderful," said Mr. Rothstein. "But it was an indiscretion —."

I was not disposed to talk as we made our way, under the glowing trees that grow in the ancient moat of the Kremlin, back to our Guest House. I wanted to think Lenin over while I had him fresh in my mind.

From *Russia in the Shadows*, London, 1920,  
pp. 123—142.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Особенной популярностью пользовалась знаменитая часовня чудотворной Иверской божьей матери возле Спасских ворот.

<sup>2</sup> Виндзорский замок — загородная резиденция английских королей.

<sup>3</sup> свой золотой век

<sup>4</sup> Суфражистки — участницы буржуазного женского движения в Англии начала XX века за предоставление женщинам равных с мужчинами избирательных прав.

<sup>5</sup> *en masse* (фр.). — в целом

<sup>6</sup> схоласты, бесплодные, как камень



# H. G. Wells

## A Very Great Man

I WENT to Russia as I have recounted in *Russia in the Shadows*, and I had a long talk with Lenin and a number of talks about him.

Now here was a fresh kind of brain for me to encounter and it was in such a key-position as no one had dreamt of as possible for anyone before the war. He appeared to be the complete master of all that was left of the resources of Russia. [...] ...the authoritative effect of him was very great indeed.

He had a personal prestige based on his sound advice and lucid vision during the revolutionary crisis. He became then the man to whom everyone ran in fear or doubt. He had the strength of simplicity of purpose combined with subtlety of thought. [...]

Like everybody else he belonged to his own time and his own phase. We met and talked each with his own preconceptions. We talked chiefly of the necessity of substituting large scale cultivation for peasant cultivation — that was eight years before the first Five Year Plan — and of the electrification of Russia, which was then still only a dream in his mind. I was sceptical about that because I was ignorant of the available water power of Russia. "Come back and see us in ten years time," he said to my doubts.

When I talked to Lenin I was much more interested in our subject than in ourselves. I forgot whether we were big or little or old or young. At that time I was chiefly impressed by the fact that he was physically a little man, and by his intense animation and simplicity of purpose. But now as I look over my fourteen-year-old book and revive my memories and

size him up against the other personalities I have known in key positions, I begin to realize what an outstanding and important figure he is in history. I grudge subscribing to the "great man" conception of human affairs, but if we are going to talk at all of greatness among our species, then I must admit that Lenin at least was a very great man.

...Lenin was already ailing when I saw him, he had to take frequent holidays, early in 1922 the doctors stopped his daily work altogether and he became partly paralysed that summer and died early in 1924. His days of full influence therefore, extended over less than five crowded years. Nevertheless in that time, he imposed upon the Russian affair, a steadfastness of constructive effort against all difficulties, that has endured to this day. But for him and his invention of the organized Communist Party, the Russian revolution would certainly have staggered into a barbaric military autocracy and ultimate social collapse. But this Communist party provided, crudely no doubt but sufficiently for the survival of the experiment, that disciplined personnel for an improvised but loyal civil service without which a revolution in a modern state is doomed to complete futility. His mind never became rigid and he turned from revolutionary activities to social reconstruction with an astonishing agility. In 1920, when I saw him, he was learning with the vigour of a youth about the possible "electrification of Russia". The conception of the Five Year Plan — but as he saw it, a series of successive provincial Plans — a Russian grid system, the achievements of Dnepropetrovsk, were all taking shape in his brain. He went on working, as a ferment, long after his working days had ended. He is still working perhaps as powerfully as ever.

During my last visit to Moscow, in July 1934, I visited his Mausoleum and saw the little man again. He seemed smaller than ever; his face very waxy and pale and his restless hands still. His beard was redder than I remembered it. His expression was very dignified and simple and a little pathetic, there was childishness and courage there, the supreme human qualities, and he sleeps — too soon for Russia.

From *Experiment in Autobiography*, V. II, London, 1934, pp. 777—780.

# Th. Bell

## Remembrances of Lenin

**E**ARLY in 1921 I received instructions to go to Moscow as the first official representative of the C.P.G.B.<sup>1</sup>

For an English worker to get a passport to leave the country at that time was extremely difficult. Having got the passport, as I did after some delay, I came up against another serious obstacle, that of visas to travel to another capitalist country. Judging from the difficulties I encountered there seemed to be an understanding or agreement among the Consulates as to certain applications from people going to the land of the Soviets. As a result I found it necessary to make arrangements to travel without papers, bag or baggage, which I did, and arrived in Moscow in the month of March, 1921, after a journey which took several weeks.

The apparatus of the Comintern in those days was confined to a small house in the Denezhney, off the Arbat, with a modest staff. In the intervals between meetings the delegates' time was occupied in studying the events of the Revolution, in international propaganda, and, of course, attending all manner of meetings of the Party and the Soviets.

It was at one of those Party meetings I first saw Lenin and heard him speak. The occasion was, I believe, a meeting of Party workers following the Tenth Party Congress<sup>2</sup> held in the month of May, 1921, at which Lenin was expounding his views on the tax in kind.<sup>3</sup> I had been a little late in arriving, due to no fault of mine, and was immediately conducted to the door leading to the platform.

When I got inside, the platform, like the hall, was crowded almost to suffocation. People were craning their necks in



the side wings and at the back of the platform to hear every word or catch a glimpse of the speaker. The speaker was Lenin. So interested and keen was everyone that comrades literally crowded round the rostrum, some leaning up against it.

It is always a difficult situation for a translator when meetings of such importance take place. The translator becomes so engrossed in the proceedings as to forget, at times, his charge. I am afraid this was the case on this occasion. The New Economic Policy had just been adopted, and the times were serious; in connection with which, deviations were discovered in the Party prior to the congress. Lenin had been triumphant at the Tenth Congress. Now the chief task was to get the whole Party to work, but before it could get down to work the opposition to this policy had to be overcome. Here was Lenin, dealing in Bolshevik fashion with the opposition, severely criticizing them and explaining the politically mistaken character of the assertions of the opposition and the harm done by them, as to provoke repeated bursts of laughter at their expense.

On the eve of the Third Congress of the C.I.<sup>4</sup> a number of extended executive meetings of the E.C.C.I.<sup>5</sup> were held in the hall directly opposite the Dom Soyuzov at the corner of Sverdlov Square. Serious discussions took place at those meetings on the Italian situation and the March uprising in Germany, as well as a number of problems connected with the Centrists<sup>6</sup> who were knocking then at the doors of the C.I. Throughout these discussions I followed with intense interest how Lenin was able in his speeches to brilliantly combine an irreconcilable adherence to principle and firmness with a surprising flexibility and tact, and could reach out the hand of comradeship and correct the wavering elements (the Italians behind Serrati at that time) and at the same time restrain the impetuosity of those ultra-lefts (Bordiga's followers) who tried to utilize the opportunist mistakes made by their Party to advance their own sectarian line.

Every student of Lenin's life and work<sup>7</sup> knows how he loved to have conversations with simple workers and his habit of closely questioning them. This practice of ascertaining the feelings of the masses he invariably carried out in the workers' circles he attended and led in Petersburg. After the proletariat seized power nothing delighted Lenin more than to

have conversations, put questions and listen eagerly for every scrap of information from comrades coming from abroad concerning the living and working conditions of the toilers and their moods. This was one of the channels which linked Lenin's life and policy with the lives and struggles of the working masses, enabling him to better sense every mood and to formulate the correct Party tactics and slogans that finally brought victory.

Lenin knew England and the working-class movement there very well. In his study of imperialism<sup>8</sup> he gave a profound analysis of the role of the English bourgeoisie in the period of imperialist expansion and of parasitic, decaying and moribund capitalism. Again and again in articles and speeches he returns to the strategy and tactics of the English bourgeoisie in corrupting the upper strata of the workers' movement, the labour aristocracy, and through them exerting pressure on the wider mass of the proletariat.

Lenin's articles never were nor could be of a character which set problems formally and theoretically; he always directed the revolutionary workers to the political tasks of the current revolutionary struggle. He loved, when he was in London, to visit the workers' quarters, go to Socialist meetings and study the English workers' movement.

This practice of conversations, of listening to what workers had to say, continued up to his untimely death.

In 1921, despite his responsible duties as Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, as leader of the Party and the Revolution, whenever a workers' delegate arrived from a brother party abroad he insisted on having a personal conversation at the earliest opportunity.

An iron-moulder by occupation, of Scotland, I had been active in the workers' movement since 1900, as propagandist, instructing workers' circles, strike leader, trade union and Party worker, and assisted to form the C.P.G.B. I had known and met most of the labour leaders and had come almost straight from the foundry floor. I mention these details because in my conversation with Lenin I was free not only to speak of our Party, of the labour leaders, the various streams in the workers' movement, but also about the living conditions and moods of the workers, which made up the substance of our talk.

It was on or about the 3rd of August, 1921 that I had a real comradely talk with Lenin. Our conversation took place in his room in the far corner of the building formerly used as the High Courts of Moscow situated in the Kremlin. Up the narrow unpretentious stairs we entered a room occupied by a staff of stenographers and typists. After announcement of our arrival we were invited to Lenin's room. No fuss or bureaucratic formalities, and punctual to the minute. The furniture consisted of a heavy writing desk against the wall and two bookshelves, one immediately behind the chair used when working, so that he had only to turn and reach for any book desired.

Rising to greet us with a hearty handshake, Lenin assisted in drawing a couple of chairs near the corner of his desk, inviting us to be comfortable, and we settled down to a real comradely talk. His first enquiry was as to our welfare. How we were in health, where did we live, had we a good room, did we have enough to eat, etc. To all of which enquiries we were able to give him satisfactory assurances.

He was very interested to know how I had travelled, legally or illegally, and chuckled with amusement at some incidents I had to relate about my journey. Formalities over, he begged to be excused for not having been able to give much attention to the English situation since his illness. Drawing his chair closer he rested his right elbow on his desk and with his right hand shading his right eye he proceeded to listen to me intently as if not to lose anything this new comrade might have to say.

Our conversation turned on the situation in England, particularly the labour leaders; who they were; their characteristics and the support they had amongst the workers; of the Whiteguard Russians abroad and their counter-revolutionary role.

Notwithstanding his assertion that he had not been able to follow events closely in England, he astonished me by taking down from his bookshelf some of the recent publications from England which he certainly had been reading, for example, Bertrand Russell's *Practice and Theory of Bolshevism* and R. W. Postgate's *Revolution and Bolshevik Theory*.

He enquired about Postgate, who he was, if a Party comrade, etc. (Postgate was then in our Party and sub-editor of our Party organ, *The Communist*. Subsequently, in 1923, he



left the C.P.G.B. to collaborate with his father-in-law, George Lansbury, in the new *Lansbury's Weekly*).

With regard to Postgate's book, *Revolution*, Lenin classed this as a mere catalogue of documents, important in themselves, but how much better, he thought, it would have been if the author had given us the material events of the respective periods, treating each period from the standpoint of the class struggle and knitting all the documents together.

We talked about the Trade Unions and the Labour Party and their relative strength and influence in the working-class movement; about our Communist Party, who was who, and its influence among the workers. Lenin was extremely interested in the miners' movement, particularly in South Wales, and I promised to give him more information from time to time. On returning to my room I jotted down in detail everything that had transpired during our talk.

A few days afterwards (on August 7th) I sent Lenin a letter in keeping with my promise. In this letter I informed him about the Annual Conference of the South Wales Miners' Federation and its decision to affiliate to the Third International.

These notes gave interesting details of the communal kitchens<sup>9</sup> in Fifehire among the miners, the manner in which the funds were raised by the workers; the support given by the local Co-operative movement, and the part played by the marines drafted into the colliery districts to quell strikes. I gave several particulars of how the workers fraternized with the sailors and expressed the hope that he would find them interesting. Lenin found such details sufficiently interesting as to write a reply almost by return. To this letter I sent another giving my views and some new information I had received. Almost immediately I left for England and our correspondence was interrupted. When I returned in 1922 he was already ill.

Here is the letter I received in full:—

"To Comrade Thomas Bell (Lux 154).

Dear Comrade,

I thank you very much for your letter (dated 7/8). I have read nothing concerning the English movement last months because of my illness and overwork,

It is extremely interesting what you communicate. Perhaps it is *the beginning* of a real proletarian mass movement in Great Britain *in the communist sense*. I am afraid we have till now in England few very feeble propagandist societies for communism (inclusive the British Communist Party) but no really *mass* communist movement.

If the South Wales Miners' Federation has decided on 24/VII to affiliate to the III. Int. [ernational] by a majority of 120 to 63 — perhaps it is the beginning of a new era. (How much miners there are in England? More than 500,000? — 25,000? How much in South Wales? How much miners were really represented in Cardiff, 24/VII, 1921?)

If these miners are not too small minority, if they fraternize with soldiers and begin a *real* "class war", — we must do all our possible to *develop* this movement and strengthen it.

Economic measures (like communal kitchens) are good but are not much important *now, before* the victory of the proletarian revolution in England. *Now the political struggle* is the most important.

English capitalists are shrewd, clever, astute. They *will* support (directly and indirectly) communal kitchens *in order* to divert the attention *from political aims*.

What is important, — is (if I am not mistaken)

1) To create a very good, really proletarian, really mass *communist party* in this part of England, — that is such party which will *really* be the *leading force* in *all* labour movement in this part of the country. (Apply the resolution on organization and work of the party adopted by the 3 congress to this part of your country.)

2) To start a daily paper of the working class, for the working class in this part of the country.

To start it not as a business (as usually newspapers are started in capitalist countries), not with big sum of money, not in ordinary and usual manner, — but as an *economic and political tool* of the masses in their struggle.

Either the miners of this district are capable to pay halfpenny daily (for the beginning *weekly*, if you like) for their own daily (or weekly) newspaper (be it very small, it is not important) — *or there is no beginning of*

*the really communist mass movement in this part of your country.*

If the Communist Party of this district cannot collect few £<sup>10</sup> in order to publish *small leaflets daily* as a beginning of the really *proletarian* communist newspaper—if it so, if *every* miner will not pay a penny for it, then there is *not serious*, not genuine affiliation to the III. Int.[ernational].

English government will apply the shrewdest means in order to suppress every beginning of this kind. Therefore we must be (in the beginning) very prudent. The paper must be *not too revolutionary* in the beginning. If you will have three editors, at least one must be non-Communist x) (x) at least two genuine workers). If 9/10 of the workers do not buy this paper, if 2/3 workers (120/120 63) do not pay special contributions f. [or] i. [instance] 1 penny weekly) for *their* paper, it will be no workers' newspaper.

I should be very glad to have few line from you concerning this theme and beg to apologise for my bad English.

with communist greetings,

Lenin."

As a matter of fact the C.P. was extremely weak then in South Wales. Amongst the miners there was a radical movement. Many trade union workers at that time were following the Russian Revolution with deep proletarian sympathy, but still not Communist. Lenin understood this. That is why he proposed the elementary step, though exceptionally important as far as the whole work of the Party was concerned, of starting a small paper to be published and maintained by those who were for support to the Third International. That this was not done was due primarily to the fact that this vote was not the result of a sustained Communist influence, to the feeble condition of the Party and its failure to grasp the political significance of such a measure. Indeed, it was not till nine years after, in 1930, that the Party was able to launch a national daily paper.

As for applying the organizational theses of the Third Congress of the C. I., it was not till the autumn of 1922 that



a beginning was made to apply these theses. This work has still to be completed.

Lenin has left us a rich heritage in economic and political science, and in revolutionary literature, from which the English workers, and especially the Communists, should with great advantage study today and draw the necessary conclusions in the struggle for a Soviet Britain.

From *We Have Met Lenin*, M., F. L. P. N., 1939,  
pp. 39—47.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The Communist Party of Great Britain — Коммунистическая партия Великобритании. Основана в 1920 году.

<sup>2</sup> Автор, видимо, имеет в виду X Всероссийскую конференцию РКП(б), состоявшуюся 26—28 мая 1921 года.

<sup>3</sup> свою точку зрения по поводу замены продрозверстки продналогом

<sup>4</sup> The Communist International — Коммунистический Интернационал.

<sup>5</sup> The Executive Committee of the Communist International — Исполком Коминтерна.

<sup>6</sup> «Центристы» — проповедники «центризма». «Центризм» — течение, осуществляющее беспринципное объединение всех фракций в социал-демократическом движении, с неизбежным подчинением этого движения оппортунизму, буржуазной идеологии и политике. В России «центризм» насаждали троцкисты. В. И. Ленин вел непримиримую борьбу с «центризмом», как наиболее опасной формой оппортунизма.

<sup>7</sup> каждый, кто знаком с жизнью и деятельностью Ленина

<sup>8</sup> Видимо, автор говорит о работе В. И. Ленина «Империализм, как высшая стадия капитализма».

<sup>9</sup> общественные кухни

<sup>10</sup> £ — round — фунт стерлингов

# T. Mann

## A Man of Extraordinary Ability

COMRADE Lenin has an easy manner on the platform, rarely talking very loudly, and judging by the cool self-possession after a two hours speech, he seemed quite equal to going on for another two hours. In appearance he is medium in height and build, light complexion, short moustache and beard, kindly twinkling eyes, which seem at close quarters tell of a lovable nature. My first introduction to him was at Congress, (R.I.L.U. congress, Moscow, July 1921)<sup>1</sup> when he was much occupied, but he added he wished much to have a good talk with me, and would arrange. Later I had a lengthy talk under conditions that enabled me to observe and draw conclusions as to the type and style of man.

My conclusions were that he is an exceedingly capable man, astonishingly well informed as to the world's doings, and especially in the chief things that matter in regard to the trend of the Governments of the world and the personalities that compose them. I look upon Comrade Lenin as a man of extraordinary ability, with a judgement suited to the exceedingly important position he occupies, knowing exactly what it all means, where hostility is to be expected, the nature and probable extent of this, and possessing a profound knowledge as to how to cope with it.

*From Russia in 1921, London, 1921.*

### NOTE

<sup>1</sup> Red International of Labour Unions Congress — Первый конгресс Красного Интернационала профсоюзов (июль, 1921),

# H. Pollitt

## The Greatest Day of My Life

ONE afternoon we were all waiting for Comrade Lenin to come to the Congress to make his report on the New Economic Policy of the Soviet Union.<sup>1</sup> [...] And there was Comrade Lenin, his papers in his hand, striding quickly up the corridor and acknowledging the loving salutations that met him on every side.

Tom Mann said he must speak to him, and advanced as Lenin came towards us. How glad he was to meet Tom Mann! His face lit up with pleasure as he told Tom how closely he had followed his activities all over the world. I was only able to shake his hand. My name meant nothing to Lenin, but that handshake meant everything in the world to me, and I seemed to walk to my place in the Congress Hall literally on air. [...]

That day on which I met Comrade Lenin was the greatest of my life.

From *Serving My Time. An Apprenticeship to Politics*, London, 1950, pp. 138—139.

### NOTE

<sup>1</sup> Автор имеет в виду II Всероссийский съезд политпросветов, на котором 17 октября 1921 года В. И. Ленин выступил с докладом о новой экономической политике и задачах политпросветов.



# H. Pollitt

## Lenin's Death

IN JANUARY, 1924, I had to go to Moscow to attend a conference of the Red International of Labour Unions,<sup>1</sup> but when I reached Berlin I was unable to get a *visa* from the Polish, Latvian or Lithuanian Consulates. The official at the Polish Consulate was very delighted about this, and boastingly showed me my photograph in a black book, explaining that I "was on the black list and would not get a *visa*." There was nothing for it but to try to get on a steamer from Stettin to Reval,<sup>2</sup> in Estonia, and find some comrades to help me on my way.

I found myself stowed away on a small ship that was leaving Stettin for Reval the same night, and I had not been long in my hiding-place before I discovered that I had a companion. I could no more understand his language than he could mine, but instinctively we knew that we belonged to the same political party and were bound for the same destination, and that was a source of mutual consolation.

The journey seemed endless, and when we began to penetrate the frozen sea, guided, as I later learned, by an ice-breaker, we experienced the strange feeling, as one does in such circumstances, that the sides of the ship were closing in on us and would crush us at any moment.

On our arrival at Reval, we stayed on board until night-fall, when arrangements were to be made to get us ashore. Immediately, as we walked along the dock, I noticed by the flare of the lights that many dockers were wearing black

bands round their arms, and continually I heard the name "Lenin" on the lips of the workers, who stood talking softly in little groups. When I got to my rendezvous, the first question that was put to me was, "Have you heard? Lenin has died."

I was thunderstruck by the news, and knew now only too well the significance of all the black mourning bands.

I stayed in Reval for a day and a night, and never have I seen such grief-stricken people as those going about their business while I was waiting for a train. I spent some time by the sea-front, and the weather was terrifically cold, which I felt all the more because I was not properly clad for such a temperature, but when I saw a great schooner tied up to the quay-side, covered with icicles from stem to stern, her beauty made me forget my discomfort. She shone clean and silvery, sparkling in the winter sunshine, and as I gazed, I thought, "Comrade Lenin is dead, but he has left the greatest heritage of all time, and it will shine through the ages like this ship in the sunlight."

That night I caught the train from Reval to Petrograd, and one whole coach was reserved for the flowers sent by the Russian comrades living in Reval to be placed on Lenin's tomb. The revolutionary movement in Estonia was at that time illegal, and as I paced up and down the platform waiting for the train to start, I was struck by the many poorly-dressed workers who crept furtively up to the train, quietly threw a few flowers into the carriage with an inscription written on a card attached to them, and then stole away. It was so loving and so simple. It was symbolic of the love and reverence which Lenin inspired among the working people of the whole world.

At Petrograd, as Leningrad was then called, everyone was taking wreaths and flowers to the station, and my train seemed to be loaded with them.

I was met in Moscow by Bob Stewart and his wife, who soon made me forget some of the discomforts of my journey. Bob told me he had been out to Gorki with an international delegation to bring back Comrade Lenin's body to lie in the House of the Trade Unions in Moscow.

Moscow's history is old and varied. It has witnessed many scenes, but never have such scenes been witnessed in any city as those which took place in Moscow during those tragic

days. The House of the Trade Unions, once the scene of the pomp and glitter of the Tsarist aristocracy, and since the Revolution the place where some of the most important Soviet and international congresses have taken place, was selected as Comrade Lenin's resting-place, so that his own people, the working people, could pay their last tribute and see once more the face of this mighty leader of the Russian workers and peasants and of the world proletariat.

I was honoured by being chosen to act as one of the Guard of Honour during the time Comrade Lenin lay in this great hall. But it was not I as an individual who was selected — I was chosen as a representative of the British working-class movement. The tribune on which Lenin lay was set in a blaze of light, and the great hall was decorated with flowers and the flags of the various organisations of the Communist Party. Outside the hall stretched queues a mile long, and they lasted for four days and nights, as workers and peasants waited their turn to pass by and salute their beloved leader for the last time. Train after train was coming into Moscow, bringing representatives from every town and village in the Soviet Union.

As they passed by the bier, their thoughts were plain to all. They were saying to themselves: "Our comrade lies here, the man who has not only been our leader, but our friend and our brother," and the tears which they wiped unashamedly from their eyes showed their love and their loyalty to Lenin and the Party which he had built.

Countless factory meetings were held in every corner of the Soviet Union, which passed resolutions expressing the workers' sorrow, but also pledging their determination to defend the Russian Revolution and carry on the struggle for Socialism, so that the ideals for which Lenin had given his life could be brought to fruition and the Red Banner of Socialism go on from triumph to triumph.

As I stood with the Guard of Honour, the spectacle of these simple people — workers, peasants, their wives and their children — paying homage to their lifelong friend and comrade, and the haunting, plaintive music sweeping through the hall, brought to my mind thoughts which cannot be expressed in any words. There were no gaudy uniforms, no glittering medals, no ostentation and pomp. Yet no king, em-



peror or tsar was rewarded by such grateful and understanding homage.

On Sunday morning at seven o'clock we assembled for the final farewell in the Hall of Columns. The place was packed. The last Guard of Honour took up its position — the leaders of the Soviet Union, and of the Communist International. Comrade Krupskaya, Lenin's faithful comrade in arms, who fought by his side for over thirty years, took her place among her comrades. Then the Funeral March was played for the last time before the procession started out on its sad journey to the Red Square, and as the last notes died away, the massed bands of the Red Guard struck up the "Internationale".

I remember so well my impression that never had the "Internationale" carried such a message of hope and triumph. It rang out like a death-knell to pessimism and defeatism. I felt that in the song was embodied the answer of the Russian workers and peasants to those who, like ghouls, saw in Lenin's death the removal of a barrier to their hopes of being able to destroy the Revolution and its achievements.

All is silent. The coffin is closed and carried slowly down the stairway, through the corridors, and out into the wind-swept streets. Outside, a sea of faces. Fluttering red banners against a background of snow. It is the coldest day, they say, since 1812, but the people have stood in the streets all night.

In the Red Square, where Lenin spoke so often to his comrades, teaching, explaining, leading them forward to new battles against difficulties, his coffin is laid on the raised platform. The crowd stands silent and erect, but, even in that piercing cold, heads are bared in solemn reverence.

There are no speeches, for who can speak at such a moment? A comrade advances and reads out the names of the provinces and towns represented at the funeral. The coffin is to lie on the platform until four o'clock.

It is now ten o'clock in the morning. The Guard of Honour, chosen from the various factories, provinces, organisations and regiments of the Red Army, is to be changed every ten minutes. Only the Kremlin chimes break through the silence. Then a comrade again advances and cries: "Workers of the world, unite." The "Internationale" is sung, and the great march past begins.

At four o'clock, the cannons crash out the final salute. I felt their roar must have echoed round the world. In every

town and village of the Soviet Union, the people stood in silence. In every country, the proletariat mourned its dead leader. Then, for the last time, I saw them lift up Comrade Lenin's body and carry it down to the vault beneath the Mausoleum. The bearers were Lenin's oldest comrades, those who, under his leadership, in exile, in prison, or working illegally, had built up the Party which carried through the Revolution and won power for the workers. For seven long years, they had withstood the assaults of counter-revolution, blockade, famine, civil war and the open hostility of world capitalism. They have won through, as we in Britain will win through.

As Bob Stewart and I stood there, we pledged ourselves and the Communist Party to which we belong to prove worthy of our trust, and to build up in Britain a revolutionary party of which we could be proud. And Comrade Lenin would desire no greater tribute, no greater memorial, than the building up of a Communist Party in Great Britain that will lead the working class in the age-long fight to smash capitalism and achieve the emancipation of the workers.

*From Serving My Time. An Apprenticeship to Politics, London, 1950, pp. 189—194.*

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Красный Интернационал профсоюзов.

<sup>2</sup> Reval (Revel) -- Ревель, ныне — Таллин,

# R. Palme Dutt

## Lenin's Strength

**L** ENIN was born in 1870 and died in 1924. His life thus covers the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the first quarter of the twentieth. His active life covers the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first quarter of the twentieth.

This period was a period of decisive change, a turning-point in human history. The War of 1914 and the Russian Revolution of 1917 are the outstanding signs of this turning-point, whose full meaning is only beginning to be understood. Lenin's life activity stands at the very centre of this transformation.

Lenin's strength, which marks him out from all the other political thinkers and leaders of this period, was that he alone, from an early point, on the strong basis of Marxism, from well before the end of the nineteenth century, saw with complete clearness the whole character of the future period, prepared for it, drew the practical, concrete conclusions, and was alone adequate to the demands of history when the time came.

What gave Lenin this unique strength to see clearly, accurately and far into the historical movement? He drew this strength from the basis of Marxism, which he brought to new life, rescuing it from the hands of pedants, philistines and routine politicians, into whose keeping it had fallen.

In order to understand the work of Lenin it is therefore essential to understand the basis of Marxism, on which he built, and the character of the epoch in which he acted. [...]



No study of Lenin can claim justification which does not strive to maintain unblunted the "revolutionary edge" of his life, work and teaching; and still more, to maintain that unity of theory and practice which was the essence of his outlook. The study of Lenin's life and work is only of value, not as an idle exercise in worship or denigration, in academic history or subjective criticism, but as a direct assistance in understanding the objective historical movement and in relation to the urgent world problems and tasks confronting us to-day.

From *The Life and Teachings of V. I. Lenin*, New York, 1936, pp. 6—7.

# R. Palme Dutt

## One Long Fight

THE POLITICAL life of Lenin reveals one long fight for the line of revolutionary Marxism against opportunism (and, when necessary, against its twin brother, empty phrase-making "leftism"). From the beginning of his leading activity in 1894 to the victory of the Revolution in 1917 he was conducting ceaselessly this indispensable inner fight within social-democracy, on the fate of which depended the future of the Russian working class. He conducted this fight fearlessly and mercilessly, never hesitating to make a break when he was convinced that this was indispensable in order to build a revolutionary mass party. His fight was understood at the time by few outside his supporters. The majority of the leaders of international socialism accused him of incurable sectarianism, doctrinairism, quarreling over phrases, fractionalism, etc., and repeatedly offered their good offices to "reconcile" and "unite" the warring sections — offers which were politely, but firmly, refused. It was difficult path that Lenin chose; but he knew what he was doing, and that his line had nothing in common with sectarianism and doctrinairism, but reflected real understanding of the needs of a revolutionary mass party. The event has proved his justification. To-day the Bolshevik Party that he built up with such minute and combative attention to every detail of program, tactics and organization, is the largest mass party in the world.

From *The Life and Teachings of V. I. Lenin*,  
New York, 1936, p. 27.

# R. Palme Dutt

## Lenin on Britain and on the British Revolution

**L**IKE Marx before him, Lenin paid special attention to the problems of Britain and the British labour movement. Lenin understood very well the reasons why the classic country of capitalism, Britain, once the leading world industrial power, should have fallen behind in the race with newer capitalist powers like the United States and Germany. He understood equally why the British working class, which had once led the way as the pioneer of the international working-class movement with the epic struggles of Chartism and the foundations of the trade unions, should have later lagged behind and remained under the yoke of landlordism and capitalism, while younger working-class movements, arriving later in the field, had already advanced to the victory of socialism. The very advantage of the former privileged position, of the world industrial monopoly and colonial monopoly, became a disadvantage. The world tribute led to stagnation of technique and development at home of British capitalism compared to younger competitors. Similarly the relatively privileged condition of a section of the workers on the same foundation, providing "relatively tolerable petty bourgeois conditions of life" within which they were more interested to struggle for further improvements of those conditions than to change the social order, furnished the basis for the domination of an opportunist leadership in the service of capitalism and rewarded with rich plums.

But Lenin equally showed that the inevitable undermining of this old privileged position of British capitalism was bring-



ing and would further bring profound changes in the political situation in Britain and in the character of the British working-class movement. The loss of the world industrial monopoly in the eighteen-eighties brought the beginning of the pioneer socialist movement, which has since become the Communist Party. The opening of the imperialist era brought the foundation of the Labour Party. The victory of the Russian socialist revolution brought the adoption of the aim of common ownership in the constitution of the Labour Party and the unification of the militant socialist movement in the Communist Party. In the solution of the problems involved in the foundation of the Communist Party, as the indispensable organisation of the Marxist vanguard, and at the same time of its relations with the Labour Party in order to assist the advance of the broad movement to socialist political consciousness and the fight for socialism, Lenin gave unwearying personal guidance and help.

From *Labour Monthly*, April 1960, London,  
pp. 155—156.

# J. Klugmann

## **Lenin, the Communist International and the British Communist Party**

**W**HILE the delegates to the Unity Convention<sup>1</sup> were fighting out the tactical line of the new Party, a similar debate on a larger, international, scale was taking place at the sessions of the Second Congress of the Third (Communist) International.<sup>2</sup> Similar differences of approach and tactics existed in varying degrees throughout the world revolutionary movement.

Ten British delegates attended, officially and/or unofficially, some or all of the Congress sessions between July 19th to August 7th, 1920. Six were officially registered as delegates to the Congress — Tom Quelch and William McLaine of the B.S.P.,<sup>3</sup> David Ramsay, Jack Tanner and J. T. Murphy from the Shop Stewards,<sup>4</sup> and Dick Beech from the International Workers of the World. William Gallacher attended as a leader of the Scottish Shop Stewards; Sylvia Pankhurst arrived late and attended the later sessions.

Here again the great debate was repeated on parliamentary activity and relations with the Labour Party. Participation in parliamentary activity was strongly opposed by William Gallacher, by most of the other Shop Stewards' representatives and by Sylvia Pankhurst. On the issue of the Labour Party the B.S.P. delegates, of course, argued the case for affiliation, though often glossing over the problems and belittling the reactionary character of the existing Labour leadership. The other British delegates opposed. Lenin participated himself, with all his eloquence and understanding, in

the discussions. His book on *Left-Wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder* had just been published, and he took to the floor of the Congress and its Commissions his fight not only against reformism and opportunism but, at the same time, against sectarianism. He had written to Sylvia Pankhurst, already in August 1919, on the need for participation by revolutionaries in parliamentary activity, declaring that:

“If the workers’ party is really *revolutionary*, if it is really a *workers’* party (that is, connected with the masses, with the majority of the working people, with the *rank and file* of the proletariat and not merely with its upper stratum), if it is really a *party*, i. e. a firmly, effectively knit *organisation of the revolutionary vanguard*, which knows how to carry on revolutionary work among the masses by all possible means, then such a party will surely be able to keep its *own* parliamentarians in hand to make of them real revolutionary propagandists, such as Karl Liebknecht was, and not opportunists, not corrupters of the proletariat with bourgeois methods, bourgeois customs, bourgeois ideas, bourgeois poverty of ideas.”

In *Left-Wing Communism* (April — May 1920) Lenin came out for the support of a Labour government in Britain by British revolutionaries, but he did not as yet touch on the question of affiliation to the Labour Party. He came out for affiliation in his *Draft Theses on the Main Tasks of the Second Congress of the Second International* (July 4th, 1920) and in his Message (dated July 8th, 1920) to the London Unity Convention, and, above all, in his speeches at the Second Congress itself (July — August, 1920).

In all Lenin’s writings and speeches on Britain in this period he laid great emphasis on the need for and the role of a Communist Party. The formation of the Party, he stressed, in his *Letter to Sylvia Pankhurst* of August 1919, is urgent. He was in favour of its formation without delay, even if the disagreement on tactical questions meant that, at first, two parties would be formed working side by side. At the Second Congress of the Communist International he repeatedly addressed himself to the Shop Stewards’ delegates, who tended to be suspicious of all political parties and to see the Shop Stewards’ or workers’ committees in general as sufficient for



the leadership of the militant and revolutionary working-class movement. He explained that what was wanted was a new type of revolutionary political party that would, on the one hand, give theoretical leadership, political understanding, training in the art and science of politics, the leading section of the working class; while, on the other, closely linked to the general Labour movement, it would help to lead in struggle the mass of the working class. Particularly he emphasised the need for the Communist Party to be intimately linked with the mass of the workers.



The Commission of the Second Congress of the Communist International that was devoted to consideration of the Labour Party and similar problems, ended, after Lenin had spoken, with a vote of 58 to 24 in favour of affiliation. The Congress discussion, and above all the patient and persuasive argumentation of Lenin, exercised a considerable influence on the British delegation, especially on William Gallacher.

In his *Revolt on the Clyde* Gallacher describes the effects of his discussions with Lenin:

"Gradually, as the discussion went on, I began to see the weakness of my position...

"The more I talked with Lenin and the other comrades, the more I came to see what the Party of the workers meant in the revolutionary struggle. It was on this, the conception of the Party, that the genius of Lenin had expressed itself. A Party of revolutionary workers, with its roots in the factories and in the streets, winning the Trade Unions and the Co-operatives with the correctness of its working-class policy, a Party with no other interests but the interests of the working class and peasant and petty bourgeois allies of the working class, such a Party, using every avenue of expression, could make an exceptionally valuable parliamentary platform for arousing the great masses of workers to energetic struggle against the capitalist enemy."

Immediately following the Second Congress of the Communist International, a new attempt was made in Britain to

bring together into the Communist Party those Marxist groups that still remained outside. Between August 1920 and January 1921 a series of meetings and discussions took place which culminated in the Leeds Unity Convention at the end of January (which became known as the Second Congress of the C.P.G.B.).<sup>5</sup>

The new Party was part of the Communist International, led by Lenin; it saw the need for international working-class solidarity. Within this framework, it could both begin to make its own contribution more effectively to the international movement and benefit from the experience of the working-class movement throughout the world.

From *Marxism Today*, January 1960, London,  
pp. 7—8, 10.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Учредительный съезд Коммунистической партии Великобритании, состоявшийся 31 июля — 1 августа 1920 года в Лондоне.

<sup>2</sup> Второй Конгресс III Коммунистического Интернационала проходил в июле — августе 1920 года.

<sup>3</sup> The British Socialist Party

<sup>4</sup> The Shop Stewards — цеховые профсоюзные старосты,

<sup>5</sup> The Communist Party of Great Britain

# R. Palme Dutt

## Lenin on Colonial Liberation

**L**ENIN... carried forward this teaching of Marxism on the national and colonial question in the era of imperialism, when the national liberation movements of the subject peoples were rapidly advancing in strength, alongside the rising challenge of the socialist working-class movement to imperialist rule. In the era of imperialism, and especially in the era of the general crisis of capitalism, the question of national and colonial liberation, and its relationship to the world socialist revolution, took on the most urgent practical importance.

Lenin emphasised "the characteristic feature of imperialism" as the division of the world into a handful of rich oppressor nations and a vast majority of oppressed nations:

"The characteristic feature of imperialism is that the whole world, as we see, is at present divided into a large number of oppressed nations, and an insignificant number of oppressing nations possessing colossal wealth and powerful military forces. The overwhelming majority of the population of the world... belongs to the oppressed nations, which are either in a state of direct colonial dependence or belong to the outlying colonial states as Persia, Turkey and China, or else, after being conquered by



the armies of a big imperialist power, have been forced into dependence upon it by treaties."

(Lenin, Report on the National and Colonial Question at the Second Congress of the Communist International, July, 1920.)

Hence the struggle of the working class in the minority of advanced imperialist countries for victory over capitalism and for the aims of socialism requires as an essential condition of victory, alliance with the national liberation movement of the oppressed peoples, representing the overwhelming majority of mankind, in the common battle against imperialism. [...]

The development of the general crisis of capitalism, with the outbreak of the first world war and the victory of the Russian socialist revolution, powerfully confirmed these teachings of Lenin. [...] A new era was opened, not only in the general stirring of the colonial peoples under the stimulus of the victorious Russian Revolution, but in the relationship of the colonial revolutions to world socialism.

Carrying forward the teachings of Marx in relation to the British working class and Ireland, Lenin laid down the duty of socialists to support the right of self-determination of all colonial and dependent peoples and to give them practical support in their struggle:

"Socialists must not only demand the unconditional and immediate liberation of the colonies without compensation — and this demand in its political expression means nothing more nor less than the recognition of the right to self-determination — but must render determined support to the more revolutionary elements in the bourgeois-democratic movements for national liberation in these countries and assist their rebellion — and if need be, their revolutionary war — *against* the imperialist powers that oppress them."

(Lenin, The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-determination, March, 1916.)

The right of self-determination carries with it the right of secession, without which it would be meaningless. The recog-

dition of the right of secession does not imply a judgment in a concrete particular case of the desirability or otherwise of secession.

"The right of nations freely to secede must not be confused with the expediency of secession of a given nation at a given moment. The party of the proletariat must decide the latter question quite independently in each particular case from the standpoint of the interests of the social development as a whole and of the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat for socialism."

(Resolution of the Seventh Conference of the Russian Communist Party on the National Question, April, 1917.)

From *The Crisis of Britain and the British Empire*,  
London, 1953, pp. 352—355.

# A. Rothstein

## Lenin on Bourgeois Democracy

OVER nearly half a century Marx and Engels showed that they very well realised the economic consequences (and possibilities) of democracy — bourgeois democracy — for the working class. But Lenin “as a Russian” had no experience of it, argues Mr. Strachey.<sup>1</sup> No, that horse won’t run either.

1899. *Our Programme*. “No economic struggle can bring the workers a stable improvement, or can even be waged on a wide scale, if the workers have not the right freely to organise meetings, unions, have their own papers, send their representatives to National Assemblies, as the workers of Germany and all other European countries do (except Turkey).”

1902. *Draft Programme of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party*. “The R.S.D.L.P. considers its immediate political task to be the overthrow of the Tsarist autocracy and its replacement by a Republic on the basis of a democratic constitution, ensuring — [then follow the fundamental demands of bourgeois democracy — supreme authority of the people’s elected assembly; adult suffrage and secret ballot; personal liberty; freedom of conscience, speech, press, meeting, formation of unions; right to strike; abolition of sex, religious and racial discrimination, etc.].”

1905. *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy*. “We cannot break out of the bourgeois-democratic framework of the Russian Revolution, but we can enlarge this framework to an enormous extent, we can and must within this framework fight for the interests of the proletariat, for its immediate needs and for conditions which will prepare its strength for com-



plete victory in the future. ...There are bourgeois democratic conditions like those in Germany and like those in England, like those in Austria and like those in America or Switzerland. A fine Marxist he would be who, during a democratic revolution, overlooked this difference between degrees of democracy and the different character of its various forms, confining himself to 'sagacious' remarks about it being after all a 'bourgeois revolution'."

1911. *Old, but Eternally New Truths*. "Beyond the slightest doubt English and French conditions are far more democratic than Prussian, far more favourable for the struggle of the working class, stand much higher in respect of the dying out of antiquated medieval institutions which hide from it its real opponent. Therefore there cannot be the slightest doubt that it is in the interests of the Russian workers to support all efforts to recreate our country on Anglo-French lines rather than Prussian. But we should not stop at this unquestionable conclusions, as happens too often."

1917. *State and Revolution*. Engels and Marx constantly repeat that "the democratic republic is the nearest approach to the dictatorship of the proletariat. For such a republic — without in the least abolishing the domination of capital, and therefore the oppression of the masses and the class struggle, inevitably leads to such an extension, development, unfolding and intensification of that struggle that, as soon as the possibility arises of satisfying the fundamental interests of the oppressed masses, this possibility is achieved inevitably and solely in the dictatorship of the proletariat. ...The fact that England said that in a democratic republic, 'no less' than in a monarchy, the state remains 'a machine for the oppression of one class by another', does not signify that the form of oppression is a matter of indifference to the proletariat, as some anarchists 'teach'."

1919. *On "Democracy" and Dictatorship*. Marxism taught the workers: "You should make use of bourgeois democracy, as a tremendous historical progress compared with feudalism, but don't for a moment forget the bourgeois character of that 'democracy', its historically conditional and limited character."

To say, when we have on record these and many other observations by Lenin on bourgeois democracy — during a political life of over thirty years — that he regarded it "simply as the contemporary form taken by the rule of the capi-

talist class", betokens either gross ignorance (and it is difficult to believe that of Mr. Strachey) or... indifference to facts.

Of course, Lenin did not say that, by the mere use of the opportunities presented by bourgeois democracy, the workers could establish a socialist system. He did not conceal the limitations of capitalist democracy: that the capitalist class always takes to arms — if it can — when faced with really serious demands by the working class, even when put forward quite democratically. But it is not for Mr. Strachey, who not only led the war on the Malayan people for doing just that but actually, in this very book, tries to manufacture a "theoretical" justification for the Tories having done it in British Guiana, to challenge Lenin's logic. He could of course have undertaken to show that, given the present balance of forces in the world — which did not exist when Lenin died in 1924 — and provided the working class in Britain is sufficiently united and resolute, there is a chance that it may come to real power without that happening here, at any rate in a fatal form. But that would not have suited Mr. Strachey's book. He wanted to say something different: that the workers can become "steadily" richer instead of poorer, and maintain a "sustained" rise in their consumption, *by agreement with the capitalist trusts* — and therefore that British imperialism has changed its nature, and doesn't need to export capital.

From *Marxism Today*, February 1960, London,  
pp. 37—38.

#### NOTE

<sup>1</sup> Стрэчи — автор книги «Конец империй», опубликованной в Великобритании в 60-е годы. В своей статье, озаглавленной «Конец империй?», видный историк рабочего движения Англии А. Ротштейн дает критический анализ положений Стрэчи и разоблачает версию автора о том, что капитализм после Второй мировой войны изменил свой характер и что поэтому этот «новый» капитализм должны защищать люди, называющие себя социалистами.

В приведенном отрывке из этой статьи А. Ротштейна собраны высказывания В. И. Ленина о буржуазной демократии.

## Lenin on Peaceful Coexistence

**F**ORTY-SIX years after the Russian Revolution there are still those in Britain who do not believe that "Peaceful Coexistence" was Lenin's policy.

[...] We will not go into that subject here. But here are just a few samples of Lenin's own words on the theme of peaceful coexistence from November 8, 1917, onwards:

*November 8, 1917:* Re a Peace Treaty: "We shall welcome all clauses containing provisions for good-neighbourly relations and economic agreements."

*December 5, 1917:* "Now the struggle for peace has begun."

*October 5, 1919:* "We are decidedly for an economic understanding with America — with all countries, but especially with America."

*February 18, 1920:* "What are our plans in Asia? They are the same as in Europe, peaceful coexistence with all peoples."

"Our aims, as already mentioned, are peaceful economic building."

*February 21, 1920:* "I know of no reason why a socialist state like ours cannot do business indefinitely with capitalist countries."

*November 21, 1920:* "The entry of the socialist country into commercial relations with capitalist countries is a most powerful factor ensuring our existence in such an intricate and absolutely exceptional situation." [...]



*December 23, 1921:* "Having started on our work of peaceful construction we shall exert all efforts to continue it without interruption." [...]

"But is the existence of a Socialist Republic in a capitalist environment conceivable in general? It seemed inconceivable from the political and military aspects. That it is possible both politically and militarily has now been proved; it exists."

*March 27, 1922:* "I can say with a fair amount of certainty that the development of regular trade relations between the Soviet Republic and the entire capitalist world is bound to continue." [...]

From *British-Soviet Friendship*, November 1963,  
London,

**Краткие биографические  
справки о лицах, чьи имена  
встречаются в книге**

**Alexeyev, N. A.** — Николай Александрович Алексеев (род. в 1873 г.), социал-демократ, искровец, большевик. Революционную деятельность начал в конце 90-х годов в Петербурге. С 1900 по 1905 год жил в Лондоне, был членом «Союза русских социал-демократов за границей», затем — «Заграничной лиги русской революционной социал-демократии». После II съезда РСДРП — представитель большевиков в Лондоне. После Октябрьской социалистической революции работал в советских и партийных органах.

**Aveling, E.** — Элеонора Маркс-Эвелинг (1855—1898), младшая дочь К. Маркса, истинная революционерка, глубоко преданная делу рабочего класса; организатор союзов неквалифицированных рабочих и чернорабочих. Вместе со своим мужем, Эдуардом Эвелингом, она была одним из руководителей организации «Социалистическая лига». После смерти Энгельса выполняла большую работу по переизданию работ Маркса и Энгельса. Незаурядный публицист и переводчик.

**Babushkin, I. V.** — Иван Васильевич Бабушкин (1873—1906), видный большевик, ученик В. И. Ленина. Активный член петербургского и екатеринославского «Союзов борьбы за освобождение рабочего класса». Принимал деятельное участие в организации ленинской «Искры». Подвергался арестам, был в ссылке. В 1906 году во время перевозки оружия Бабушкин был схвачен карательным отрядом и без суда и следствия расстрелян.

**Balfour, Arthur** — Артур Бальфур (1848—1930), английский реакционный государственный и политический деятель, лидер консерваторов. В 1902—1905 годах — премьер-министр, в 1915—1916 годах — морской министр, в 1916—1919 годах — министр иностранных дел. Один из организаторов агрессивного англо-японского союза 1902 года, направленного против России. После Великой Октябрьской социалистической революции Бальфур явился одним из организаторов антисоветской интервенции.

**Ball, John** — Джон Болл (ум. в 1381 г.), английский народный проповедник, один из вождей крестьянского восстания Уота Тайлера. Казнен при подавлении восстания.

**Bauman, N. E.** — Николай Эрнестович Бауман (1873—1905), профессиональный революционер, один из активнейших организаторов «Искры». Был делегатом II съезда РСДРП, где выступал как стойкий последователь В. И. Ленина. 18 октября 1905 года Н. Э. Бауман был зверски убит в Москве черносотенцами.

**Bell, Thomas** — Томас Белл (1882—1940) — шотландский рабочий, литейщик. В 1900 году вступил в Независимую рабочую партию Англии. Принимал деятельное участие в создании Социалистической рабочей партии, был членом ее ЦК, генеральным секретарем и редактором еженедельника «Социалист». Во время первой мировой войны работал в профсоюзах, был председателем Шотландского союза литейщиков. В 1920 году принимал участие в организации Коммунистической партии Великобритании. С 1920 по 1929 год — член ЦК и Политбюро КПВ. Делегат III, VI и VII конгрессов Коммунистического Интернационала. В 1921—1922 и 1928—1929 годах — представитель Коммунистической партии Великобритании при Исполкоме Коминтерна. В 1922—1923 годах — политический секретарь ЦК Коммунистической партии Великобритании, а в 1923—1925 годах — руководитель отдела пропаганды ЦК и редактор журнала «Коммунист ревью». В 1925 году отбыл шестимесячное тюремное заключение (в числе 12 руководителей компартии). В 1930—1931 годах — председатель Общества друзей Советского Союза и Англии. С 1936 по 1939 год — на ответственной работе в МОПРе.

**Dutt, Rajam Pulme** — Раджем Палм Датт (род. в 1896 г.), видный деятель Коммунистической партии Великобритании. Автор ряда крупных работ, в частности *The Crisis of Britain and the British Empire*, и многочисленных статей. В настоящее время редактор ежемесячника *Labour Monthly*. Член Исполкома Коммунистической партии Великобритании.

**Fox, Ralph** — Ралф Фокс (1900—1937), английский прогрессивный публицист и историк. Один из первых и наиболее крупных в Англии марксистских литературных критиков. Коммунист. Дважды посетил СССР; написал биографию В. И. Ленина, статью о М. Горьком. Автор работы «Классовая борьба в Британии в эпоху империализма» (1934) и ряда других работ по истории Англии и Ирландии. Погиб, сражаясь против фашистов в рядах интернациональной бригады в Испании.

**Gallacher, William** — Уильям Галлахер (1881—1965), выдающийся деятель английского рабочего и коммунистического движения, один из основателей и руководителей Коммунистической партии Великобритании. В 1920 году на II конгрессе Коминтерна представлял движение фабрично-заводских старост Англии. Беседы с В. И. Лениным помогли ему преодолеть левосектантские ошибки. В 1921 году Галлахер вступил



в Коммунистическую партию Великобритании; делегат V и VII конгрессов Коминтерна; член ЦК и Политбюро ЦК, с 1943 года — председатель Исполкома, а с 1956 — президент Коммунистической партии Великобритании. В 1963 году избран пожизненно почетным членом Исполкома КПВ.

**Gusev, S. I.** — Сергей Иванович Гусев (1874—1933), известный революционер. В 1896 году — член петербургского «Союза борьбы за освобождение рабочего класса». С 1903 года — большевик; постоянно избирался на руководящую партийную работу; подвергался арестам и ссылкам. В 1917 году — секретарь Петроградского военно-революционного комитета. В 1928—1933 годах — член Президиума Исполкома Коминтерна.

**Jackson, Frank** — Фрэнк Джексон (род. в 1887 г.), плотник по профессии, активный участник рабочего движения; член Коммунистической партии Великобритании с момента ее основания в 1920 году. Много лет был редактором рабочей газеты Builders Leader. В настоящее время заведующий библиотекой Центрального Комитета КПВ.

**Klugmann, James** — Джеймс Клугман, редактор ежемесячного журнала Marxism Today, издаваемого Коммунистической партией Великобритании в настоящее время.

**Lansbury, George** — Георг Лансбери (1859—1940), старейший социал-демократ, член Социал-демократической федерации. Один из первых депутатов-лейбористов в парламенте. Был редактором Daily Herald и Lansbury Weekly. В феврале 1920 года был на приеме у В. И. Ленина в Кремле. По возвращении написал книгу What I Saw in Russia.

**Liebknecht, Karl** — Карл Либкнехт (1871—1919), выдающийся деятель германского и международного рабочего революционного движения, один из основателей Коммунистической партии Германии. Восторженно встретил Великую Октябрьскую социалистическую революцию; принимал активное участие в организации борьбы немецкого пролетариата в ноябре 1918 года. 15 января 1919 года вместе с Розой Люксембург был зверски убит контрреволюционерами.

**Litvinov, M. M.** — Максим Максимович Литвинов (1876—1951), видный советский дипломат. Вступил в РСДРП в 1898 году; с 1903 года — большевик. С 1902 по 1918 год был в эмиграции (с небольшими перерывами), главным образом в Англии. С 1921 по 1939 год — сначала заместитель наркома, а затем нарком иностранных дел. В 1941—1943 годах — посол СССР в США. Был членом ЦК ВКП(б).

**MacDiarmid, Hugh** — Хью Макдермид (род. в 1892 г.) — псевдоним известного шотландского поэта коммуниста Кристофера Мюррея Грива (Christopher Murrey Grieve). С 12 лет начал публиковать свои стихотворения в газетах и журналах. «Три гимна Ленину» были написаны им в 1931—1932 годах.

- McLaine, William** — Вильям Мак Лейн, инженер, с 1917 года член Британской социалистической партии (БСП), один из активных деятелей ее левого крыла, образовавшего в 1920 году коммунистическую партию. Принимал деятельное участие в организации революционного интернационального движения. На II конгрессе Коминтерна (1920) занимал правильную позицию по вопросу об отношении к парламенту.
- Mann, Tom** — Том Манн (1856—1914) инженер, видный ветеран рабочего движения в Англии, деятель профсоюзного международного движения. Участник Учредительного съезда Коммунистической партии Великобритании в 1920 году. Был представителем профсоюзов Англии в Красном Интернационале профсоюзов.
- Martov, L.** — Мартов Л. — псевдоним Юлия Борисовича Цедербаума (1873—1923). Один из лидеров меньшевизма, непримиримый враг Коммунистической партии и Советского государства. В 1920 году эмигрировал за границу.
- Pankhurst, Sylvia** — Сильвия Панкхерст, социалистка, возглавляла одну из нескольких существовавших в начале XX века рабочих партий в Англии — Социалистическую федерацию рабочих.
- Pollett, Harry** — Гарри Поллит (1890—1960), видный деятель английского и международного рабочего движения. В 1918—1919 годах — организатор движения фабрично-заводских старост в районе Темзы. Был одним из организаторов движения «Руки прочь от России!», направленного против антисоветской интервенции. Один из основателей Коммунистической партии Великобритании. С 1922 года — член ЦК и Политбюро ЦК, а с 1929 года — генеральный секретарь Коммунистической партии Великобритании. Неоднократно подвергался репрессиям. В 1924—1943 годах — член Исполкома Коминтерна. В 1949 году от имени компартии заявил, что если империалисты развяжут войну против СССР английские рабочие поступят так же, как и во время антисоветской интервенции в 1920 году и сделают продолжение этой войны невозможным. В 1956 году был избран председателем Исполкома КПВ.
- Quelch, Harry** — Гарри Квелч (1858—1913), видный деятель английского и международного рабочего движения. Квелч возглавлял революционные элементы английской Социал-демократической федерации, пропагандировал идеи марксизма, с 1886 года редактировал газету Justice («Справедливость») и ежемесячник «Социал-демократ». Являлся делегатом ряда международных конгрессов II Интернационала и членом Международного социалистического бюро. Принимал активное участие в деятельности английских профессиональных союзов. В период издания в Лондоне ленинской «Искры» (1902—1903) активно содействовал организации печатания газеты.
- Quelch, Tom** — Том Квелч, представитель Британской социалистической партии на II Конгрессе Коммунистического

Интернационала. В 1920 году — член Исполкома Коминтерна от Великобритании.

**Reed, John** — Джон Рид (1887—1920), американский журналист, приехал в Россию в 1917 году в качестве военного корреспондента, примкнул к большевикам и принимал участие в Великой Октябрьской социалистической революции, события которой отразил в книге «10 дней, которые потрясли мир». Джон Рид был одним из основателей Коммунистической партии США. Умер в Москве и похоронен на Красной площади у Кремлевской стены.

**Rothstein, Andrew** — Эндрю Ротштейн (род. в 1898 г.), известный английский журналист и историк, видный деятель Коммунистической партии Великобритании с момента ее основания. Председатель правления Библиотеки Маркса (Дома Маркса) в Лондоне, вице-президент Общества англо-советской дружбы.

**Rothstein, F. A.** — Федор Аронович Ротштейн (1871—1953), советский историк и общественный деятель, академик. Член КПСС с 1901 года. Находясь в эмиграции в Англии, участвовал в создании Коммунистической партии Великобритании. В августе 1920 года вернулся в СССР и на протяжении ряда лет был на дипломатической работе.

**Russel, Bertrand** — лорд Бертран Рассел (род. в 1872 г.), английский математик и философ. Выступает за мирное сосуществование государств. В 1958 году был избран президентом созданной в Англии организации «Кампания за ядерное разоружение».

**Shaw, G. B.** — Джордж Бернард Шоу (1856—1950), выдающийся английский писатель, драматург и публицист. Шоу сочувственно принял Великую Октябрьскую социалистическую революцию и защищал ее от нападок. Высоко ценил В. И. Ленина. В 1921 году послал Владимиру Ильичу одну из своих книг со следующей дарственной надписью: «Николаю Ленину — единственному государственному деятелю Европы, который обладает талантом, характером и знаниями, соответствующими его ответственному положению. 16 июня 1921. От Бернарда Шоу».

В годы второй мировой войны (1939—1945) он выступал против фашизма.

**Stasova, E. D.** — Елена Дмитриевна Стасова (1873—1967), старейший деятель русского революционного движения, член КПСС с 1898 года. Вела большую подпольную революционную работу. С марта 1917 по март 1920 года — секретарь ЦК партии. С 1921 по 1929 год была на руководящей работе в Коминтерне, затем председателем ЦК МОПР. С 1946 года занималась общественно-литературной деятельностью.



**Tskhakaya, M.** — Миха Цхакая (Михаил Григорьевич) (1865—1950), профессиональный революционер. В РСДРП с 1898 года. Неоднократно подвергался арестам и ссылкам. С 1907 по 1917 год находился в эмиграции в Женеве. В 1917—1920 годах — член Тифлисского комитета партии. С 1923 по 1931 год — председатель Грузинского ЦИК.

**Tyler, Wat** — Уот Тайлер (ум. в 1381 г.), деревенский ремесленник, возглавивший вместе с Джоном Боллом крестьянское антифеодальное восстание в 1381 году. Восставшие требовали отмены крепостного права, а наиболее радикальная часть — наделения крестьян землей и уничтожения сословных различий. Во время переговоров с королем Уот Тайлер был предательски убит.

**Vanderlip** — Вандерлип, представитель деловых кругов США, приехавший в СССР для заключения концессионного договора. О переговорах с Вандерлипом В. И. Ленин упоминал в ряде выступлений зимой 1920 и 1921 годов. Вандерлип был охарактеризован В. И. Лениным тогда как представитель «финансового капитала самой деляческой марки», а в его проектах В. И. Ленин увидел совершенно откровенное, сделанное «с неслыханной циничностью» изложение точки зрения империализма.

**Wells, G. H.** — Герберт Уэллс (1866—1946), выдающийся английский романист, крупнейший писатель-фантаст и публицист; в 1920 году был в Москве и встретился с В. И. Лениным. По возвращении на родину издал книгу «Россия во мгле». В 1921 году В. И. Ленин прочитал эту книгу на английском языке и сделал на ней ряд весьма характерных пометок, текст которых воспроизведен в приложении к книге «Россия во мгле», изданной Госполитиздатом в 1958 году. Осуждая буржуазное общество, Уэллс видел выход из социальных противоречий только в реформах, осуществляемых преимущественно технической интеллигенцией, выдвигал реакционную утопию «организованного капитализма». Впоследствии Уэллс стал антифашистом и выступал с осуждением фашизма. В время второй мировой войны призывал к поддержке СССР в его борьбе против фашистского варварства. В самом конце своего жизненного пути он сказал: «Я являюсь лондонским избирателем участка Мерилебон и активно поддерживаю возрождающуюся коммунистическую партию».

**Zasulich, V. I.** — Вера Ивановна Засулич (1851—1919), народница, затем социал-демократка. В 1878 году покушалась на петербургского градоначальника. В 1880 году эмигрировала за границу. В 1903 году примкнула к меньшевикам. В 1917 году была членом меньшевистской контрреволюционной группы «Единство».

**Zemlyachka, R. S.** — Розалия Самойловна Землячка (1876—1947), видный деятель Коммунистической партии и Советского государства. С 90-х годов XIX века участвовала в революционном движении. Была агентом «Искры». В 1903—1904 годах — член ЦК партии, затем член Бюро комитетов большинства. Неоднократно сидела в тюрьмах, жила в эмиграции. С 1917 года была на руководящей партийной работе в Крыму, на Урале, в Москве. С 1939 по 1943 год была заместителем председателя СНК СССР. С 1939 года — член ЦК ВКП(б).

**Zubатов** — Зубатов, начальник московского охранного отделения, инициатор создания фальшивых рабочих организаций под контролем царской охранки. Первая зубатовская организация возникла в Москве в 1901 году. Этот метод борьбы с рабочим движением в России в годы подъема революционного движения в 1901—1904 годах получил название «зубатовщины». Очень скоро «зубатовщина» была сметена все возмставшим революционным движением.

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